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# Latins in Roman (Byzantine) Histories

*Ambivalent Representations in  
the Long Twelfth Century*

*By*

Samuel Pablo Müller



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# Contents

Acknowledgements IX

Note on Transliteration and Translations X

Introduction 1

- 1 Methodological and Theoretical Approach 5
  - 1.1 *Identity and Alterity Intertwined* 6
  - 1.2 *The Complex Relationship between (Literary) Representations and Attitudes* 9
- 2 State of Research 11
  - 2.1 *Relations between Romania and the West* 11
  - 2.2 *The Image of Latins* 14

## PART I

### *Background*

- 1 Identities of Byzantine-Roman Literati and Their Representation of “Others” and Westerners 21
  - 1 Identities and Representations of “Others” 21
  - 2 The West and Westerners in Greek Literature: Historiographers of the Komnenian Period and Other Sources 43
    - 2.1 *Historiography* 46
      - 2.1.1 Anna Komnene 46
      - 2.1.2 Ioannes Kinnamos 49
      - 2.1.3 Eustathios of Thessalonike 50
      - 2.1.4 Niketas Choniates 51
      - 2.1.5 Ioannes Zonaras and Michael Glykas 55
      - 2.1.6 Shorter Literary Works Devoted to a Historical Event: Manasses and Mesarites 58
      - 2.1.7 Histories Devoted to the Period before 1081 58
    - 2.2 *Additional Sources* 60
      - 2.2.1 Oratory, Poetry, Letters, Novels 60
      - 2.2.2 Theological and Religious Writings 65
      - 2.2.3 Imperial and Patriarchal Documents 70
      - 2.2.4 Non-textual Sources 70

## PART 2

*The Portrayal of the Western Presence within the Empire and of Westerners in Imperial Service*

- 2 **Ambiguous Relations with Italians** 75
- 1 The Close and Fluctuating Relationship with Βενέτικοι (Venetians) 75
- 1.1 *Proximity and Difference Prior to the Second Crusade* 75
- 1.2 *Cooperation, Coexistence, Conflict, and the Coup of 1171* 85
- 1.3 *An Uneasy Restoration of Relations Marked by Imperial Failure* 96
- 2 Πισσαίοι (Pisans) and Γενουίται (Genoese) in Venice's Shadow 103
- 2.1 *A Very Generic Portrayal of Their Ascendancy and Integration* 103
- 2.2 *"Anti-Latin"? The Accounts of the So-Called Latin Massacre in 1182* 113
- 2.3 *The Equally Contingent Character of Later Attacks in the Capital* 120
- 2.4 *Μεγαρέτης (Margaritone) and Καφούρης (Gafforio)* 126
- 3 Encomiastic Praise and Approval with Hindsight of the Byzantine Network in Italy 129
- 3.1 *Other Alliances with Italian Cities* 129
- 3.2 *Το Ἀγκωνίται (People of Ancona) and Their Supporters* 131
- 3 **Compatibility, Superiority, and Introspection Reflected in Empresses** 139
- 1 Alliance with Ούγγρια (Hungary): Eirene (Piroska) and Maria (Margaret) 141
- 1.1 *The Exploitation of Eirene's (Piroska's) Origin in the Service of Imperial Propaganda* 141
- 1.2 *The Similar Case of Maria (Margaret)* 146
- 2 Eirene (Bertha of Sulzbach) as an Exception to the Rule of Easy Integration 148
- 3 Maria/Xene (Margaret-Constance) of Antioch and the Myth of the "Hated Latin" in the Scholarship 159
- 4 Anna (Agnes) and the Unequal Alliance with France 166
- 4 **The Brothers from Μόντη Φεράντη (Montferrat) as a Male Counterpart** 171
- 1 The Beauty and Virtue of Ioannes (Renier of Montferrat) 171
- 2 Korrados (Conrad of Montferrat): Role Model and Savior 174

- 5 **The Integration of Princes into the Imperial Hierarchy** 181
- 1 Tentative Heir, Client Ruler, Ally: Alexios/Βελᾶς (Bela) 181
  - 2 The Successful and Not So Successful Management of Hungarian Royals 194
- 6 **The Special Case of the “Barbarian Ax-Bearers”** 200
- 7 **Other Illustrative Cases** 207
- 1 In the Imperial Army 207
    - 1.1 *The Importance of Mercenaries* 207
    - 1.2 *Ourselios (Roussel De Bailleul)* 213
  - 2 In Various Contexts 218
    - 2.1 *The Differing Degrees of “Romanization” of Ἀλέξανδρος (Alexander of Gravina) and Βασαβίλας (Robert of Bassonville)* 218
    - 2.2 *Cultural Disinterest, Integration, and Acceptance* 221
  - 3 The Foundation of Aristocratic Dynasties 224
- 8 **“Xenophobia”? Remarks about Recruitment in Government and the Army** 234

## PART 3

*The Portrayal of External Relations with the West*

- 9 **The Importance of “Kelts” and “Sicilians” (Normans)**  
*More Genericism, Introspection, Ambivalence, and Proximity* 245
- 1 Anti-heroes of the *Alexiad*: Rompertos and Baimountos 245
    - 1.1 *The First Phase: Rompertos (Robert Guiscard)* 247
    - 1.2 *The Long Struggle against Baimountos (Bohemond) and Tangre (Tancred)* 260
  - 2 “Tyrants” and Kings 271
    - 2.1 *Rogeros (Roger II): Usurper of Byzantine Rights, Symbol of Imperial Decline* 271
    - 2.2 *Kaiserkritik and Its Personally Inclined Counterpart in Two Differing Accounts of the Italian War (1155–58)* 279
    - 2.3 *Differing Motivations behind the Portrayal of the Byzantine-Sicilian War* 291
- 10 **The Hero’s Challenge**  
*Incursions of “Franks,” “Latins,” and “Kelts”* 308

11	<b>Imperial Propaganda versus <i>Kaiserkritik</i> in the Accounts of the Second Incursion</b>	322
12	<b>The Staufers as a Rivaling Threat and a Model to Byzantine Emperors</b>	339
1	Frederikos (Frederick Barbarossa)	339
2	Amerrigos (Henry VI) and Choniates's <i>Kaiserkritik</i>	357
13	<b>Victories over "Huns" (Hungarians) Diminished and Magnified</b>	365
14	<b>Divine Retribution, Disruption, and Continuities</b>	
	<i>The Conquerors of Romania (Fourth Crusade)</i>	370
1	Shattering Pillars of Identity: The Capture and Sack of the Imperial City	371
2	Instrument and Victims of Divine Retribution, a Model against Which to Be Measured	384
2.1	<i>The First Year after the Fall of the City until the Turning Point of Adrianople</i>	384
2.2	<i>Between Resignation, Hope, and Exhortation: The Last Pages of Choniates's History</i>	396
15	<b>(Potential) Alliances</b>	406
1	Enerichos (Henry IV) versus the Pope (Gregory VII)	406
2	Anna's Hindsight and Ἰσαγγέλης (Raymond of Saint-Gilles)	410
3	The Hohenstaufen and Austrian Alliance	413
4	Antioch	418
4.1	<i>The Praise of Raimountos</i>	419
4.2	<i>Different Perspectives on Renaldos (Raynald) and Rituals in Antioch</i>	425
5	The Imperial Protectorate on Display in the Holy Land	429
6	Amerrigos (Amalric of Jerusalem) as a Foil	433
7	The Praise of Frederikos (Frederick Barbarossa)	444
	<b>Conclusion</b>	450
1	Results of the Investigation	450
2	<i>Desiderata</i> for Future Related Research	462
	<b>Bibliography</b>	465
	Primary Sources	465
	Secondary Sources	473
	<b>Index</b>	532



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## Note on Transliteration and Translations

As this study is about Byzantine historiography it tries to follow the perspective of this historiography as closely as possible, therefore it largely subscribes to the opinion of Dimitris Krallis on “Anglicization and Latinization” and the corresponding guidelines. In that spirit, the book often quotes Greek names for Latin groups and individuals. Greek forms of proper names of Byzantine persons and places are used, ἥτα (η) being transcribed as e, as in Manasses, Dalassene or Digenes unless the text is in italics, in which case *ē* is used. As noted by Krallis as well, however, it is difficult and probably not even desirable to remain fully consistent. Thus, some exceptions are allowed for, particularly for place names and ancient authors, e.g., Constantinople instead of Konstantinoupolis.<sup>1</sup> Transcription is used for a few Greek terms that have some currency in academic usage, but any word is given in the original Greek form when it is first mentioned.

When rendering Byzantine sources quoted in this study into English, I have made ample use of the modern translations indicated in the bibliography, making frequent corrections, adaptations, and changes, however, based on my own understanding of the Greek editions. Translations contained in secondary sources are indicated separately. The translations which were used most frequently for the historiographical works are Reinsch’s for the *Alexiad*, Trapp’s for Zonaras and Brand’s for Kinnamos. For Choniates, the careful Italian translation by Pontani was the main reference alongside Grabler’s German version based on the Bekker edition. In the case of Eustathios’s account of the conquest of Thessalonike, it was Hunger’s excellent translation, but I also consulted those by Rotolo (accompanying the edition by Kyriakidis), Melville Jones, and Odorico. In addition, I am also indebted to Andrew Stone’s translation of a selection of Eustathios’s orations.

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<sup>1</sup> See Krallis (2012), p. xvii.

# Introduction

The period from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth century—the so-called long twelfth century—encompassed a decisive phase in Byzantine history. It was marked by Byzantium's or, to use a source-based term, Romania's<sup>1</sup> reaction to Western expansion in the form of the crusades, the rise of the Normans, and Italian maritime trade. The empire's key political and economic zone shifted to the Balkans and thus closer to Central and Western Europe than ever before. Christianity has been deeply affected by the conquest of 1204, right up to the present day. The conquest of the Byzantine capital had important repercussions on the cultural, political, and economic development of the Eastern Mediterranean and thus on Europe and the Near East. Despite the significance of the conquest, there has been no recent comprehensive study of relations between Byzantium and the West in general or an investigation of Byzantine attitudes toward the West and Westerners in the period of the long twelfth century.

This book is intended to contribute to closing the gap in the scholarship by investigating the image of Latins in Byzantine historiography of the Komnenian period. This can be defined roughly as the period when the Komnenian dynasty (1081–1185), and a side-branch of the Komnenoi, the Angeloi (1185–1204), occupied the Byzantine imperial throne.<sup>2</sup> The period was shaped by the transformative decade following the battle of Manzikert (1071), which should be regarded as an integral part of the long twelfth century.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, this book will be relevant for Byzantinists and medievalists alike, providing a fresh and more comprehensive examination of the image of Latins in Byzantine historiography of a crucial period, not only for Byzantium but for Europe and the Near East as a whole.

This monograph's chief interest is historical. It does not deny in any way the crucial importance of stylistic, linguistic, rhetorical, and literary aspects of the interpretation of Greek historiographical works, which were always intended

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1 For the meaning and use of terms such as “Byzantium,” “Byzantine(s),” “Romania,” or “Roman(s),” see Chapter 1, esp. pp. 22–23.

2 As the rather brief period of the Angeloi seems to be marked by a certain continuity with the political order established by Alexios I and his successors and because the Angeloi were a branch line of the Komnenian dynasty—Alexios III even styled himself Komnenos—it seems justified to refer to the whole period between 1081 and 1204 as Komnenian.

3 The inclusion of this decade's historiography would, however, go beyond the already ambitious scope of this book.

as literature. These aspects are considered throughout, as they constitute an important historical dimension in themselves. The focus, however, lies on the social, political, and cultural context in which Byzantine historiography was composed. This context may include the biographical circumstances of an individual author, his or her audience, relations of various kinds with the Western world, structures and living conditions of the society in which the histories were produced, and Byzantine identities and attitudes.

The scope of this book is therefore ambitious. In addition to a close reading of the complex and extensive primary source material, it is also based on a vast amount of secondary literature. However, the book touches on so many aspects that it cannot possibly claim to cite and have engaged with all relevant secondary sources. Nevertheless, a comprehensive investigation was called for and the conclusions would have been considerably less meaningful if only some of the historiographical works and/or some Western groups and individuals had been considered. Accordingly, the book does not claim to deal with every detail and aspect of the topic thoroughly but aims to contribute to and stimulate new approaches to and discussions about the representation of Latins in Byzantine literature, and, where needed, more detailed investigations of particular aspects. The key objective is therefore to provide answers to and contribute to the scholarly debate about the following set of questions:

- How are Westerners or Latins<sup>4</sup> of the period between ca. 1081 and 1204 described and characterized in the Greek historiographical works of the Komnenian period in the roles they played with regards to the Byzantines and more generally?
- What differences and similarities concerning these descriptions and characterizations can be observed between the individual historiographical works as well as the versions of Niketas Choniates's *ἱστορία / χρονική διήγησης*?
- What motivations are behind these descriptions and characterizations? How can they be explained?

In other words: what Byzantine historiographers of the Komnenian period wrote about Latins and why. Key characteristics of the image of the West and Westerners are identified, sometimes in strong disagreement, notably, with older and, occasionally, with more recent scholarship.

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4 For the present study, the term “Latins,” routinely employed by Byzantine historiographers of the long twelfth century, is used interchangeably with “Westerners” in its broad general sense of Christian peoples hailing from Western and Central Europe and following the Roman rite. Another characteristic is the use of Latin as the principal scholarly language. See also Koder (2002a); Rodriguez Suarez (2019), p. 182.

Numerous hypotheses about the image and perception of Latins, often uncritically accepted, need a more thorough revision. Many scholars continue to neglect how strongly this image is subject to “internal” Byzantine matters, which are the primary concern of the histories. It has much to do with Byzantine introspective tendencies and the upholding of a representation and attitude of cultural as well as political superiority. Moreover, Byzantine literati described Latins in a consciously literary manner, which means that defamatory *topoi* associated with peoples (ἔθνη) and with barbarians always need to be viewed in the context of these literary traditions and not uncritically accepted as a reflection of unequivocal negative Byzantine feelings. Rhetoric, hyperbole, the historical background of the events and people portrayed, as well as the context of a historiographical work as a whole, must be taken into account.<sup>5</sup> When doing so, it becomes apparent how distorting it is to simply sum up the image of Latins as “negative.” The prose of Choniates, Eustathios, or Anna Komnene is anything but simple, rather it is ambivalent, complex, and subtle, and so is their portrayal of Latins. Defamatory or eulogistic comments that appear as generalizing thus always need to be placed in context. Obvious as it may be, such an approach has often been neglected in the scholarship, especially in the case of “negative” portrayals of Latins.

Westerners had a special status based on cultural proximity for Byzantium, which not infrequently tends to be underestimated in the scholarship and becomes more apparent when contextualizing the frequent negative *topoi* found in the Greek sources. In spite of the loss of the knowledge of Greek in the West and of Latin in the Byzantine world, both Byzantines and Latins were aware of their common Christianity, as well of the Greco-Latin heritage they shared, having their origins in the ancient Roman Empire. Common ground can also be found in the virtues described as ideal in Byzantine and Western literary works, notably the military prowess that Western knighthood and nobility shared to a remarkable degree with the Komnenian military aristocracy, with which Byzantine literati often associated. The histories mostly imply these factors or merely refer to them without engaging in a discussion, but many of the interactions with the Latin world that they describe would have been much harder or unthinkable with other non-Byzantines, such as Muslims, most notably the frequent marriage alliances in the Komnenian period or the (potential) acceptance of the βασιλεύς as overlord. While aspects that Latins and Byzantines had in common could often be causes of division,

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<sup>5</sup> Rhetoric is not understood here as an opposite of truth or the facts or as invalidating, but it requires critical interpretation and is often not suitable for a literal interpretation without due consideration of its contexts. See Ch. 1, pp. 41–42.

they also held promise. Until 1204, the image presented of Latins does not suggest steadily increasing tension but rather appears to be characterized by fickleness and ambivalence.

Such patterns of literary representation, which are summarized more comprehensively in the conclusion of this book, can be used as shorthand for referring to multiple recurrences of the same phenomenon. Additionally, the index can be used as a guide to selective reading about features or characteristics of the image of Latins.

In what follows, after a brief presentation of the methodology and state of research, an overview will be given of Byzantine literature of the long twelfth century, preceded by a discussion of (markers of) identities and attitudes of Byzantine literati, which formed the basis of their portrayal of Latins (Part 1). The subsequent investigation of the historiographical sources (Parts 2 and 3) will be structured according to characteristics of the image of Latins and their various relations with the Byzantines as represented in the historiographical material. The presentation, for the most part, resembles a historical commentary and roughly summarizes and follows the chronological narratives of relations with identifiable Western individuals and groups in order to show how their image is developed and how certain features of the representation of Latins transcend individual authors, subject matters, and contexts and appear both repeatedly and consistently in most or all of the case studies. The roles which this book attributes to Latins are of course not necessarily described as such by the sources and can also be based on heuristic categories.

This approach highlights not only the rich variety of Byzantine-Latin relations on many different levels but also the need for a close reading of the source material and the importance of interpreting it in context. In some cases, most notably Chapters 6 and 10 and the first half of Chapter 9, the investigation follows the narratives less closely and is more oriented toward characteristics of the representation of an individual or group. This is because, among other reasons, in these cases the structure of a commentary would be too extensive for the present purposes.

Greek historiography subordinates the discussion of Latins and the West to a focus on Byzantine imperial history. Two main groups of Latins can thus be identified: firstly, those who resided within the empire's borders or served the Byzantines in various capacities (Part 2), and secondly, all those who appear within the discussion of Byzantium's external relations (Part 3). These collectives and individuals are variously portrayed as enemies, rivals, attackers, or invaders, Romania's conquerors, or (potential) allies and friends. The word "external" entails a modern perspective but reflects that Byzantine historiography, while not abandoning an ecumenical or "universalist" outlook,

differentiates between an ideological stance and a pragmatic awareness that there were definable limits to the fiscal and military reach of the imperial government. Certain rulers and peoples were outside of this reach, i.e., external. Interestingly, the image of external relations and relations within the empire is not fundamentally different, which is consistent with a generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine historiography and literature more generally;<sup>6</sup> the portrayal of the Western presence in the empire, however, points more strongly to the integration of and cultural proximity with Latins.

## 1 Methodological and Theoretical Approach

This book has been written in full awareness that it cannot possibly exhaust the potential of the extremely complex and rich source material, whose interpretation could benefit from many different approaches as well.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, excessively theoretical approaches can be a hindrance and make the argument less clear and more ambiguous to the extent that it becomes very difficult or impossible to discern what an author means to say.<sup>8</sup> As a result, a limited selection of approaches which seemed particularly pertinent to the topic and feasible within the constraints of a single book was chosen. Three crucial, interconnected approaches and perspectives shall be discussed in general terms in what follows:

- Identity: how people see and portray themselves; how others see and portray them and respond to them
- Alterity: the concept of otherness
- Attitudes: these not particularly conscious patterns of thought and mind-sets may include emotional and behavioral patterns

Obviously, these approaches and perspectives are infinitely complex. It is only practicable within the framework of this book to briefly introduce some general concepts and approaches and their applicability to its topic, before turning to the identities of *Ῥωμαῖοι* specifically—with a focus on the social strata of the historiographers—as well as their representations of and possible attitudes toward “others.”

6 This tendency will be characterized in the first section of Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

7 See Conclusion, pp. 462–463.

8 See Kaldellis (2007a), p. x: “I have tried never to deviate from the rule that anything worth saying can be said in lucid English. Too much theory can sometimes make it impossible to say anything straightforward at all.”

### 1.1 *Identity and Alterity Intertwined*

The concepts of identity and alterity are of special significance to the present topic. Identity can be defined as how groups and individuals perceive and portray themselves, and how “others” see and portray them and respond to them. Alterity, its counterpart, centers on perceptions and portrayals of “others” or “otherness,” anything or anyone identified as “different,” “foreign,” “strange,” “outside,” or something similar.<sup>9</sup> The concepts are strongly interconnected, and many observations about identity and alterity are relevant for attitudes, mindsets, and thought patterns as well.

The end of the Cold War appears to have led to an even more pronounced interest in personal and collective identity in the humanities, including Western medieval and Byzantine studies.<sup>10</sup> It has often, and correctly, been observed that the identification and perception of otherness is intimately and directly linked to what individuals and groups (intersubjectively) perceive or identify as something of their own, their norms. Thus alterity and identity are inseparable and in constant interplay.<sup>11</sup> Concerning the boundaries or boundary markers between “us” and “them,” the consensus in the scholarship appears to be that these boundary markers, which could also be referred to as markers of difference or of proximity, are never “objective,” but exist as mental constructs of groups and individuals.<sup>12</sup> When such imaginary boundaries, which are, however, perpetually in flux,<sup>13</sup> or the social space occupied by a group and constituting its identity, are trespassed, the group or society tends to react defensively.<sup>14</sup>

Accordingly, it is always relevant to ask how the Byzantines’ representation of “others” is linked to their representation and views of themselves. This representation is complex and multifaceted, all the more so because an individual

9 On the term and concepts of alterity, see Becker and Mohr (2012), esp. pp. 32–43.

10 Koder (1996), p. 3. Examples of recent articles and books by Byzantinists that deal with theories of identity include Fledelius (1996); Koder (1996, 2003, 2011, 2019); Smythe (1996); Kaldellis (2007a, 2017); Page (2008); Rapp (2008); Stouraitis (2014, 2017a); Mitsiou (2015); Papadopoulou (2015); Durak and Jevtić (2019). Papadopoulou gives detailed insights into ethnonyms and other collective terms, such as ἔθνος, γένος, or φύλον, which are applied to Byzantines in the Greek sources. See, however, the critical review by Stouraitis (2017b), which stresses points made in his articles.

11 See e.g., Mullett (2000), p. 20; Kühnel (2008), p. 478; Stuzinger (2008), p. 459; Tounta (2010b), p. 114; Koder (2011), pp. 69–70 (incl. note 6); Becker and Mohr (2012), pp. 40–42.

12 Smythe (1996), p. 29. Mental boundaries, however, are necessary from an anthropological perspective, as they establish an orientation and ways of regulating behavior and dealing with the complexity of the world. See Loewenstein (1995), p. 11.

13 See Loewenstein (1995), p. 14.

14 See Loewenstein (1995), p. 12; Smythe (1996), p. 30.



can never be said to possess a single identity but multiple, coexisting, occasionally conflicting or hybrid identities.<sup>15</sup> Identity and alterity are not neatly definable, therefore, but fluid. The mechanisms of dealing with these polarities are situational and contextual.<sup>16</sup> They can be approached by means of certain markers, such as dress,<sup>17</sup> hairstyle, education, language, pronunciation,<sup>18</sup> vocabulary, religion, customs, and so on.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, studying identity and alterity is always dependent to an extent on the viewpoint of the beholder. Ascribed identities and perceptions of “others” do not necessarily, and probably never fully, correspond to the standpoint of the individuals and collectives under consideration.<sup>20</sup>

Identity, alterity (and mental boundaries between the two), as well as mindsets, can therefore be expressed in media or forms of communication such as symbols, written sources, ceremonies, games, or rituals. Occasionally, such media can help create a bridge and speak to the differing identities and mindsets of the actors involved, even if their interpretations may differ; a case in point related to the object of the present study being the oaths that the leaders of the First Crusade swore to the Byzantine emperor.<sup>21</sup> For the medieval period, communication is observable only in an indirect way, i.e., as represented in sources.<sup>22</sup> A major problem with this is that written sources are in most cases produced or controlled by limited upper social strata.<sup>23</sup> This means that the perspective of the masses, who had no or little access to writing, is underrepresented. It is likely, however, that there was minimal acceptance of the ideas, attitudes, and ideologies expressed in the source material among lower strata

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15 See e.g., Smythe (1996), pp. 28–29; Durak and Jevtić (2019), p. 17. Accordingly, whenever the singular is used in this book (i.e., identity), it is a collective singular that signifies a complex of identities.

16 Durak and Jevtić (2019), pp. 19–20.

17 Kaldellis (2019a).

18 See Grünbart (2011), pp. 224, 231, for the importance of pronunciation and voice as markers of origin, social status, and identity in Romania.

19 Smythe (1996), pp. 34, 36; (2010), pp. 67, 72. The same holds true for mentalities, i.e., mindsets and thought patterns. The number of such possible markers is limitless: see Durak and Jevtić (2019), pp. 16–17. See also Grünbart (2014a); (2014b), p. 19, for the importance of literary and rhetorical education (παιδεία) as a “social marker” in twelfth-century Romania.

20 See Rapp (2008), p. 129, who refers to the term “Byzantine” as representative of an ascribed identity. For this point, see Ch 1.

21 Loewenstein (1995), p. 12.

22 On medieval forms of communication and media, see the reflections made by Kiening (2007), who employs the German phrase “Medialität.” On the investigation of ritual in medieval studies, see Goetz (1999), pp. 212–218.

23 Rapp (2008), p. 129.

of society, even if ideas and ideologies were understood differently, and it is possible to assume a minimal correlation of attitudes between the standpoints of lower and higher strata of society.<sup>24</sup> Another difficulty is that the outlook of certain literati on certain issues may be particular to them and not reflective of their social peers or superiors.<sup>25</sup>

As already noted with respect to identities, one can approach alterity by identifying labels that indicate it. Such terms do not constitute “objective” categories, and the assigning of labels is a changeable, inconstant, and often incoherent process taking place in a society that is constantly in flux.<sup>26</sup>

In full cognizance of these limitations, Dion C. Smythe<sup>27</sup> presents a flexible matrix model of five modes of interaction between groups on the one hand and five modalities of difference or similarity between groups on the other. This model could, of course, be extended almost indefinitely, but can be applied tentatively to what the histories convey about Latins. The modes of interaction are annihilation, segregation, (social) stratification, pluralism, and assimilation, whereas the modalities of difference (or proximity) are defined as ethnicity (or nationality), (sexual) orientation, gender, religion, and social class (or τᾶξις). Some of these modes are less applicable to the image of Latins in Byzantine literature and others may be more reflective of different medieval polities, collectives, and sources, notably segregation, pluralism, and ethnicity. Some, in turn, come much closer to the Byzantine literary representations of identity and alterity in the context of the West and Westerners, especially stratification, assimilation, and *taxis*, reflecting ideas and attitudes of aristocracy and cultural-political superiority.<sup>28</sup>

Other relevant topics in connection with alterity and identity are stereotypes and *topoi*. They can be defined here as consisting of trait characteristics of groups of people, traits that tend to have evaluative connotations and are characterized by being undifferentiated. In the case of Byzantine literature, *topoi* characteristically often do not necessarily or strongly reflect attitudes toward Latins, but rather follow literary and rhetorical traditions, refer to a particular context or situation, are meant to underline social differentiation,

24 Smythe (1992), pp. 15, 20–21; (1997a), p. 150 and n. 55; Koder (1996), p. 3.

25 See e.g., Mullett (2000), p. 2.

26 See Smythe (2010), pp. 73–74 and 79, where he describes the nature of outsider status as “mutable.”

27 Smythe (1997b); (2010), pp. 73–74.

28 For a more detailed discussion of Byzantine identities and literary representations of “others,” see Ch. 1.

and mark pillars of identity. Thus they need to be weighed against everything else a literary work or a literatus conveys.<sup>29</sup>

## 1.2 *The Complex Relationship between (Literary) Representations and Attitudes*

A general, important issue for historians to deal with is that human thinking is conditioned by the cultural and social context in which one lives, which applies both to the context of an investigation of the past and to the particular topic being investigated.<sup>30</sup>

Scholars have frequently said that “mentality” and terms related to it do not allow for a narrow and precise definition, nor are there any clear-cut methodologies that can be assigned to a history of mentalities.<sup>31</sup> The term has been deeply marked, however, by French historiography and the so-called Annales School in particular.<sup>32</sup> Obviously, the approaches of today’s historians who explore mentalities differ in part from those pursued by scholars in the past regarded as representative of the Annales School.

Mentalities could be described in terms of the definition presented by Hans-Werner Goetz.<sup>33</sup> They constitute attitudes, subconscious patterns of thought or habitual ways of perception or thinking, i.e., mindsets. Accordingly, an important indicator of attitudes is what is taken for granted in sources. Traditionally, mindsets are studied with a focus on various groups or collectivities rather than on individuals. They are a necessary consequence of the complexity of the environment human beings deal with. Thus attitudes and thought patterns facilitate concrete and effective actions in daily life and hence are an indispensable aspect of human thought and behavior.<sup>34</sup> They are to be distinguished from more conscious beliefs, opinions and ideologies, which are often of a more individual nature but nevertheless depend upon pre-existing

29 Smythe (1992), pp. 59–61, and *ibid.*, ch. 6.

30 Bleumer and Patzold (2003), pp. 8, 14–15; Goetz (2003), p. 26. Smythe (1992), pp. 55–56, refers to identity and human collectives, but it is equally valid for attitudes. Quoting Peter L. Berger and others, he also considers that attitude (or alternatively ideology) can be regarded as structure or social interaction maintaining a social group or thought world.

31 Burke (1997), p. 162; Goetz (1999), p. 277; Dinzelbacher (2008), p. XIX. See also Goetz (2007).

32 See e.g., Burke (1997), pp. 163–166; Dinzelbacher (2008), pp. XVII–XVIII, who underlines the vagueness of the term, as there is no “Annales School” in the strict sense of the word. This would require that the identified proponents of it loosely agree on a common epistemology, which is not the case.

33 Goetz (1999), p. 277. For a different definition, see Dinzelbacher (2008), p. XXIV.

34 Smythe (1992), p. 59.

perceptions of one's environment. A focus on attitudes and related concepts aspires to the investigation of human ways of thinking as an important historical dimension, and not just as a tool to get to "facts."<sup>35</sup>

Attitudes are also difficult to study because evidence is related to them in a complex way. For instance, what one writes does not have to be representative of what or how one thinks. The attitudes of medieval or Byzantine authors and societies outside a literary sphere could be very different from what their representation might suggest. Nevertheless, any man-made historical evidence is shaped by perspectives conditioned by attitudes created in a social and cultural environment; thinking about attitudes is crucial and must not be dismissed as speculation. As is the case with identities and alterity, attitudes can only be approached indirectly and are subject to the limitations of medieval source material with regard to the fact that attitudes of lower social strata are less directly and prominently represented, even if a minimal level of conformity can be assumed with respect to attitudes of upper social strata.<sup>36</sup>

What is essential is due caution about the hypothetical nature of any assumptions about attitudes. Taking this into account, an investigation of attitudes can be a useful interpretative tool which allows for additional perspectives on the source material and thus enriches modern approaches to the past. Just as one may well have multiple identities and belong to various, sometimes conflicting, groups at the same time, one may hold contradictory or conflicting attitudes. There are many layers and filters between historical phenomena and their reflection in primary sources, and they are shaped in turn by modern perceptions, attitudes, evaluations, wishes, and assessments.<sup>37</sup> This complexity is a warning against the oversimplification and distortion of labeling relationships between individuals and collectives as "anti-" or "pro-." Modern perceptions often give rise to the imposition of anachronistic ideas on the source material,

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35 Goetz (1979), pp. 8–10; (2003), pp. 20–21.

36 Smythe (1992), pp. 15, 20–21. See also Smythe (1997a), p. 150 and n. 55. This was the working hypothesis of a research project in Vienna focusing on ideologies of the lower strata of Romania's society: see Koder, Stouraitis, and Heilo (2019). On possibilities of finding indications of the ideology and attitudes of the common people (especially in Constantinople), see also Garland (1992); Kaldellis (2015), esp. chs. 4 and 5; (2019c). However, Garland's hypothesis of strong "anti-Latin" attitudes displayed by the common people of Constantinople has a tenuous basis in the sources, as will be shown. See also Haldon (2016), who argues that Kaldellis points out important and neglected aspects of the Byzantine polity, but does tend to carry the "sovereignty of the people" approach too far.

37 Goetz (2003), p. 27. See also the models visualizing these filters and layers in Goetz (2003), p. 29 (discussion on pp. 26–29).

notably concepts such as the nation state and xenophobia, which seem more of a hindrance than a help in approaching twelfth-century Romania.<sup>38</sup>

Language and style will be crucial in examining source material, notably terminology. The language used can be indicative of attitudes. Of special importance are so-called key content items. Gill Page employs this term in relation to identity, but it is equally valid for attitudes.<sup>39</sup> In the present context, such key content items can be the epithets used for Westerners, virtues and vices ascribed to them, as well as the vocabulary Byzantine literary works use to refer to fellow Byzantines or to the limited social stratum of people who had the necessary skills to comprehensively appreciate them (such as “Hellenes” or “Romans” or “those who possess higher education”).

## 2 State of Research

### 2.1 *Relations between Romania and the West*

Scholarly interest in the relations between Romania and the Western world is as old as the beginnings of modern Byzantine Studies.<sup>40</sup> Among the older studies, some are still relevant for modern scholarship.<sup>41</sup> In more recent years, an increasing attention to the relationship in question has resulted in numerous important books and articles of reference on many of its aspects.<sup>42</sup> This

38 See the discussion in Ch. 1.

39 Page (2008), p. 72 (“usage of particular items of vocabulary can be used to elucidate patterns of thought”).

40 See the brief overview with further references in Schreiner (2011a), pp. 124–128.

41 Of major importance among the studies produced before 1980 are the books by Chalandon (1900, 1907, 1912). See also Kap-Her (1881); Ohnsorge (1947, 1963, 1966, 1983); Lamma (1955–1957, 1968); Dölger (1964); Hecht (1967); Brand (1968); Baker (1973); Geanakoplos (1976); Classen (1983).

42 See indicatively the following monographs and volumes: Lilie (1993b, 2004); Berschin (1988, on cultural relations), Magdalino (1993b); Angold (1995, 1997); Ciggaar (1996); Augé (2007); Drocourt (2015, diplomatic relations). For the Fourth Crusade and relations from the completion of the Norman conquest of southern Italy to the early period of Frankish rule: Carile (1978); Goss and Bornstein (1986); Howard-Johnston (1988); Ciggaar and Van Aalst (1990); Hundsbichler (1994); Lock (1995); Barsanti (1996); Ciggaar (1996–2003, 2006); Konstantinou (1997); Angold (2003); Prinzing and Salamon (1999); Laiou and Mottahedeh (2001); Laiou (2005); Schreiner and Maltezoú (2002); Cavallo (2004); Phillips (2004); Balard, Malamut, and Spieser (2005); Ciggaar and Metcalf (2006); Ortalli (2006); Whitby (2007); Maltezoú et al. (2009); Madden (2008); Moschonas (2008); Piatti (2008); Hinterberger and Schabel (2011); Van Tricht (2011); Chrissis, Kolia-Dermizaki, and Papageorgiou (2019). On the religious relationship, see: Smith (1978); Gill (1979); Spiteris (1979); Beck (1980); Hamilton (1980); Fedalto (1981); Becker (1988); Grumel and Darrouzès (1989); Papadakis and Meyendorff (1994); Vauchez and Engels (1994); Lees (1998); Palese

is at least in part connected to the post-Cold War *zeitgeist* and the attention accorded to “transcultural” or “intercultural”<sup>43</sup> issues, identities and perceptions of “others” in the context of globalization. The terms “intercultural” and “transcultural” can be hazardous in a number of ways. The approach represented by Michael Borgolte and others is entirely justified as an attempt to overcome constraints of artificial cultural separations still maintained in the humanities, in spite of common features and parallel developments.<sup>44</sup> Still, the said terms can be useful on an analytical, abstract level—indeed Borgolte makes use of them himself. They will be rarely employed here because they are not considered useful for the purpose of this study. Terms such as “foreign” or “stranger” ought to be employed with caution for similar reasons. Furthermore, while corresponding terms existed in Romania, they were of course employed and understood differently. Indeed, modern concepts of “foreign” and “stranger” and similar expressions inevitably exert a strong influence when applied to medieval societies and are often more distorting than helpful. Accordingly, the present study gives preference to other terms, e.g., “non-Byzantine.”<sup>45</sup> However, it still seems acceptable to speak of “Romania” or “Byzantium” and the “West” on a level of abstraction, albeit in full awareness that they were nothing like separate, homogeneous entities.

Byzantine-Western relations, as well as the Byzantine representation of Latins, are clearly ambivalent and characterized by many important parallels and differences, the more so as both had a common religious and cultural Greco-Roman background. It is therefore not useful to evaluate the relationship in question in terms of being either “intercultural” or “intracultural,” for

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and Locatelli (1999); Kolbaba (2000)—a publication on Byzantine religious attitudes toward the Latins is being prepared by her; Laiou and Mottahedeh (2001); Pahlitzsch (2001); Avvakumov (2002); Bayer (2002); Nikolakopoulos et al. (2002); Chadwick (2003), esp. pp. 200–237; Cortesi (2004); Cristianità (2004); Nikolaou (2004); Bruns (2005); Louth (2007); Sicienski (2010, 2017); Cameron (2016), esp. ch. 2; Demacopoulos (2019); Neocleous (2019). See also older relevant studies such as Michel (1939); Runciman (1955); Beck (1959); Congar (1959); Dondaine (1952, 1958); Darrouzès (1965); Dvornik (1966). On the diplomatic exchange between the emperor or the patriarch respectively with Western powers and rulers, see (among others) the studies of Lounghis (1980a); Shepard (1992, 1996, 2005); Kresten and Gastgeber; Drocourt (2015), as well as the inventories of the patriarchal and imperial documents: Grumel and Darrouzès (1989); Dölger and Wirth (1995).

43 E.g., Borgolte and Tischler (2012). The terms “intercultural” or “transcultural” can be problematic in several ways, on which see Höfert (2008); Fabian (2009); Christ et al. (2016); Drews and Scholl (2016).

44 Höfert (2008); Fabian (2009).

45 Ch. 1 will discuss Byzantine terminology and concepts in brief, pp. 28–30.

it seems evident that it was both.<sup>46</sup> The discussion of this question, applied to various case studies, has strongly influenced not only Byzantine studies<sup>47</sup> but medieval history, and history and the humanities in general.<sup>48</sup> It has been recognized that the long twelfth century was a crucial period that saw the most extensive presence of Westerners in the empire and Romania's most intense contacts with the West since late antiquity.<sup>49</sup> These contacts are certainly an important explanatory factor for the representation of Westerners in historiography, even if, as has been mentioned, the crucial internal Byzantine context constitutes an even more important background.<sup>50</sup> However, a recent, comprehensive monograph about Byzantine-Western relations during the twelfth century does not exist. Peter Schreiner has identified such a study as a *desideratum*.<sup>51</sup>

It is not considered necessary to summarize Byzantine-Western relations in the long twelfth century here—the reader is referred instead to the many recent introductions to this topic.<sup>52</sup> There is, however, a crucial observation to be made at this point: it cannot be stressed enough how important it is not to postulate a linear or teleological development of the relations in question. Up to the present day, a picture of steadily mounting tension between Byzantines and Latins has been influential in the scholarship.<sup>53</sup> Before 1204, and to a more limited degree

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46 Tounta (2010b), p. 112; Mitsiou (2015).

47 See the first section of Ch. 1.

48 This has already been observed with regards to identities. Examples for the interest accorded to “transcultural” topics can be found everywhere, see e.g., Borgolte and Schneidmüller (2010); Borgolte and Tischler (2012); Christ et al. (2016); Drews and Scholl (2016). It is unnecessary to mention any further examples, as the many books, articles, conferences, and research projects devoted every year to the subject speak for themselves.

49 See e.g., the assessment in Laiou (2005), p. 17. Concerning the Western presence in Romania during the reigns of Alexios I and Ioannes II (1081–1143), see Rodríguez Suarez (2014).

50 For the development of Byzantine society in the long twelfth century, see indicatively: Lilie (1984b); Kazhdan and Epstein (1985); Cheynet (1990, 2006); Oikonomides (1991); Magdalino (1993b); Angold (1995).

51 See Schreiner (2011a), p. 171.

52 See above, n. 42.

53 For the image of mounting tension or alienation, cf. Ebels-Hoving (1971), esp. pp. 272–285; (1990), p. 26 (where she does, however, express a critical view of the “theory of the growing hatred during the crusades”); Asdracha (1983), pp. 32–33; Schieffer (2008) (speaking of “zunehmende Entfremdung” on p. 31, albeit with relativizations); Eshel (2018), ch. 7. See also the literature referenced by Neocleous (2012a), pp. 184–185 (incl. nn. 3–4); (2019), pp. 1–5. Some scholars have rejected the concept before Neocleous; see esp. Laiou (2004), pp. 19–20 (arguing in favor of ambiguity as a crucial feature of Byzantine-Western relations), 33–34 (a plea for the recognition of the complexity of the said relations rather marked by fickleness than mounting tension, at least before 1204).

after,<sup>54</sup> the Byzantine relationship with the West seems to have been of an ambivalent and complex nature and fluctuated more or less constantly between conflict, confrontation, and war and appeasement, cooperation, exchange, alliance, as well as ties of kinship and friendship. In this, it was at least in part not fundamentally different from fluctuating social and political relations within the empire and among “Byzantines”—with demarcations employed on an abstract level.<sup>55</sup> It seems inappropriate, therefore, to study relations with Westerners under the inflexible, easily distorting assumption of steadily mounting tension. Rather, tension in one respect or another could increase time and again, but decrease again on many occasions, depending on changing circumstances. Accordingly, there appears to be a consensus in today’s scholarship that the conquest of 1204, whose causes have been discussed extensively, was not an inevitable event or a necessary result of what came before. It may have been facilitated by pre-existing differences and a certain animosity exacerbated by the many conflicts that had occurred in the long twelfth century. At any rate, such factors made it easier to justify the conquest in retrospect. However, other factors, such as contingency, seem to have been more influential.<sup>56</sup> In conclusion, the historical evidence makes it appropriate to speak of a highly ambivalent, complex, and constantly fluctuating relationship. This is what the Greek sources of the period convey, and plausibly many of the Western ones as well.<sup>57</sup>

## 2.2 *The Image of Latins*

Curiously, there is no comprehensive, book-length investigation of the outlook of Greek medieval literary works and other Byzantine sources on the West and Westerners.<sup>58</sup> This seems particularly noteworthy because several scholars have devoted extensive publications to the image of Byzantines in Western sources of the period in question, most recently Marc Carrier and Savvas Neocleous.<sup>59</sup>

54 For the period after 1204, see Page (2008), p. 6.

55 For a similar view, see Laiou (2005), p. 17. See also Cheynet (2019), p. 84, observing that more recent publications have added nuance and that the long twelfth century “cannot be reduced to a mere march towards a growing mutual hatred”. See also Phillips (2019), pp. 101–102, emphasizing the increasingly acknowledged complexity of Byzantine-Western relations.

56 See e.g.—with references to various opinions and views—Lilie (2008); Neocleous (2012a); Maleczek (2013).

57 See e.g. Laiou (2004), pp. 44–48; (2005), p. 13; Neocleous (2019).

58 For “Late Byzantine Perceptions of the West” (after 1204), Nikolaos G. Christis is currently preparing a monograph, see Christis (2019).

59 Neocleous (2009, 2019); Carrier (2012). Both authors have published various shorter contributions on the topic as well. A first series of studies appeared around 1970: Kindlimann (1969); Arbagi (1970); Ebels-Hoving (1971).



In recent years, an impressive number of studies have dealt with the representation of Westerners in general terms and in various contexts. Unfortunately, with the exception of Tia Kolbaba's study of the lists of Latin religious errors,<sup>60</sup> these are articles or collections of articles and in one case a short monograph.<sup>61</sup> There has been an equally extensive number of contributions on specific groups of Latins, individuals, and sources, especially Normans, one of the most prominent groups of Westerners in Byzantine historiography.<sup>62</sup> Even more comprehensive is the secondary literature on the portrayal of the "crusades" and "crusaders," although Greek historiographers do not refer to their passage through the empire in those terms. In addition to the immense bibliography on Romania and the crusades, various articles have focused more specifically on the perception and image of crusades and crusaders, including the concept of "Holy War."<sup>63</sup> Numerous publications have focused on various other groups, themes, sources, and individuals,<sup>64</sup> although many topics could still benefit from further investigation.<sup>65</sup>

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60 Kolbaba (2000).

61 Nicol (1967); Hunger (1987); Koder (1987, 2002a); Magdalino (1988); Shepard (1988a); Hermans (1990); Schreiner (1992); Gounaridis (1994, 2006a, 2008); Hohlweg (1996a, 1996b); Lilie (1996, 2006); Laiou (1998b); Simpson (1998, 1999); Kazhdan (2001); Ciggaar (2003, 2006); Kislinger (2008); Messis (2011a); Rickelt (2015); Chrissis, Kolia-Dermizaki, and Papageorgiou (2019).

62 Among others: Hermans (1979); Burgarella (1981, 2000); Shepard (1988b, on Bohemond in the *Alexiad*); Loud (1991, on the *Alexiad*); Balard (1994); Schmitt (1997, on Choniates); Gallina (1999); Kolia-Dermizaki (2008); Kislinger (2009b); Tounta (2010b).

63 See France (1984); Lilie (1987, 1993a, 2004); Reinsch (1989); Kolia-Dermizaki (1991a, 1991b, 2000, 2012); Thomas (1991); Laiou (1993); Magdalino (1996); Kolbaba (1998); Dennis (2001); Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001); Stephenson (2003); Roche (2008, 2015); Stouraitis (2011); Gallina (2013); Chrissis (2016).

64 Relevant publications include Böhm (1936), on Emperor Frederick I; Asdracha (1983), on Kinnamos and Choniates; Abrahamse (1986), on hagiography; Ditten (1988), on "Alamanni" and "Germans" in ancient and Byzantine sources; Todt (1988), on Bertha of Sulzbach; (2001), on the death of Frederick I in Choniates's history; (2007), on the image of "Germans"; Hörandner (1993, 1994), on courtly poetry; Laitso (1998), on German crusaders in Kinnamos's history; Kolbaba (2000, 2001, 2006, 2010), on lists of Latin errors and the representation of Latins in a religious context; Stone (2003b), on an oration by Eustathios of Thessalonike for Agnes of France; (2005), on Eustathios's description of the wedding of Agnes of France and the heir to throne Alexios; Bossina (2004, 2006, 2009b), on Choniates's religious work; Gallina (2006), on Michael Choniates; Efthymiadis (2008); on Kinnamos's and Choniates's account of the poisoning of Stephen IV of Hungary; Isnenghi (2008a, 2008b), on Konstantinos Stilbes and Nikolaos Mesarites; Schreiner (2008); on Venetians; Tounta (2008a), on Bertha of Sulzbach in imperial panegyric; Mitisiou (2010), another discussion of Frederick I's portrayal in Choniates's history; Berkes (2011), on Hungarians in the work of Choniates; Papadopoulou (2012), on the image of the Latin conquerors of 1204.

65 For a few possibilities for further investigation, see Conclusion, pp. 462–463.

And yet, despite all this, a comprehensive survey of the image of Latins has yet to be undertaken.<sup>66</sup>

A first group of studies contains assumptions and hypotheses, especially for the period of the twelfth century, that the present book argues against. While most of these publications do have common ground with its findings, they often tend to emphasize Byzantine “xenophobia” and the “negativity” specifically of the representation of and attitudes towards the West more generally or large groups of Westerners. The image of Latins is characterized as reflecting a gradual alienation during the twelfth century. Not least due to their limited scope, these publications tend to insufficiently relativize negative topoi and assertions by putting them in context. Moreover, the genericism of and introspective motivations behind the sources<sup>67</sup> do not receive enough attention.<sup>68</sup> There are also numerous articles that (appear to) revert to the said tendencies, assumptions and hypotheses only in isolated instances.<sup>69</sup> Books that touch upon the topic reflect these tendencies as well.<sup>70</sup> All this highlights the need for more extensive, nuanced, and detailed investigations.

A second group of publications, while not specifically devoted to the image of Latins, puts a very clear emphasis on its ambivalence and genericism, as well as the necessary relativization of negative topoi and the introspective motivations to which the image is subordinated. Most recently, Savvas Neocleous has shown how dubious this teleological narrative is for Latin representations of and attitudes toward Byzantines. Moreover, he has convincingly questioned the interpretation of negative themes in the literature in the

66 See the still valid assessment in Ciggaar (2006).

67 These tendencies will be explained in the first section of Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

68 Cf., for example, the following publications: Asdracha (1983), esp. pp. 32–33; Simpson (1999); Gounaridis (2006a); Lilie (2006); Kolia-Dermitzaki (2008); Eshel (2018), esp. ch. 7; Roche (2018); Origone (2019), esp. pp. 41, 43, 51; Borghese (2018); Papadopoulou (2019), esp. pp. 244–245, 252; Papageorgiou (2019), who, based on tenuous evidence, engage in various generalizations about supposed negative Byzantine attitudes toward Latin groups and Latins more generally, occasionally also in a teleological tendency to see the conquest of 1204 as a culmination.

69 E.g., Mitsiou (2015), p. 67. Based on a dubious interpretation of Byzantine religious works, Mitsiou affirms that “anti-Latin” sentiments generally became stronger during the twelfth century. Cf. also Messis (2011a), pp. 154–155, with regard to the representation of Italians residing in Byzantium; Chrissis (2019), pp. 261–262; E. Jeffreys (2019), p. 138.

70 Cf. the following examples: Angold (1997), e.g. on p. 254 and pp. 296–297; Lilie (2004), e.g. p. 124; Harris (2014), esp. pp. 123–125; Siecienski (2017), p. 277; Neocleous (2019), p. 242: “the Byzantine intellectual elite [...] saw twelfth-century Europe in terms of a united West versus Byzantium, going so far as to regard the crusades as a sinister plot against the Byzantine state.”

context of Constantinopolitan riots in the late twelfth century and argued against the interpretation of these riots as expressions of “Latinophobia”.<sup>71</sup> Anthony Kaldellis has pointed out very clearly how a crucial finding of the present monograph is in line with a broader aspect of Byzantine literature of the period in question: it follows generic and introspective tendencies with regard to ethnography or the image of other peoples. These peoples are less important for their own sake than for the function they fulfill for the introspective agenda of a literary work.<sup>72</sup> Kaldellis’s book about Byzantine Hellenism, an important marker of literary identities in the 1100s, has demonstrated how it is a dubious proposition to postulate the development of a strongly “anti-Latin” Hellenism for the twelfth century, which the histories and other literary works do not indicate, and rightly stresses the importance of being Roman as a marker of identity for the literati, on whom the present study focuses, but also other Byzantines. He also makes the valid observation that the markers of being Roman were not limited to being a Christian and an imperial subject but were more complex and comprehensive, notably in terms of cultural criteria. As the histories show, the assessment of Latins was similarly multifaceted, ambiguous, and complex.<sup>73</sup>

Accordingly, the present monograph aims to address the lack of more comprehensive and in-depth studies of the representation of Latins, which has contributed to questionable conclusions in the literature. It is the first book-length study to deal with the image of Latins in Byzantine histories of the Komnenian period in detailed case studies covering the portrayal of all major Western individuals and collectives. This examination demonstrates how the influential assumptions and hypotheses represented in the first group of studies fail to convince when applied to the historiographical evidence and how the second group can be made fruitful.

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71 Neocleous (2013b, 2019).

72 Kaldellis (2013). For a definition of the generic and introspective tendencies of Byzantine literature, see the first section of Chapter 1, pp. 33–35.

73 Kaldellis (2007a).



**PART 1**

*Background*





# Identities of Byzantine-Roman Literati and Their Representation of “Others” and Westerners

## 1 Identities and Representations of “Others”

Identity is key to understanding its counterpart alterity and is inseparable from it. The present chapter briefly draws attention to some key characteristics associated with the identities of Byzantine-Roman literati of the twelfth century, characteristics that should be kept in mind when dealing with the image of Latins.

It is useful to approach what is referred to as Byzantine-Roman identities by means of a triangle of interrelated and occasionally conflicting Hellenic (or Greek), Roman, and Judeo-Christian elements,<sup>1</sup> “whose combinations and permutations required a flexible mentality capable of deciding on a case-by-case basis what to accept and what to reject.”<sup>2</sup> While these three elements are emphasized and described quite differently, the broad consensus in the scholarship on the subject is clear. Identities do not allow for a straightforward investigation, but are complex, multifaceted phenomena which can only be approached by means of certain markers.<sup>3</sup>

The first aspect examined here was central to Byzantine-Roman identities, to a greater or lesser extent for the entire duration of the empire: *Romanitas* or Ῥωμαιοσύνη, i.e., being Roman,<sup>4</sup> and its relation to Hellenism, the interest in and identification with Hellenic antiquity. This includes the phenomenon that has been described as “anti-Latin Hellenism,” meaning a tendency of authors to stress Hellenic aspects which they contrast unfavorably with the characteristics of portrayed Latins in the twelfth and mainly subsequent centuries.

Based on source material of the Komnenian period, the core identities of higher social strata clearly remained Roman, and would remain so during subsequent centuries,<sup>5</sup> numerous statements that contradict one another in the

1 See e.g., Smythe (1992), p. 2; Speck (1996), pp. 4–5; Cupane (2007), p. 137; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 2–3; Rapp (2008), p. 134, Chrissis (2019).

2 Kaldellis (2007b), p. 24.

3 Kaldellis (2013), p. 126: “Ideally, we should plot each representation of a foreign culture along multiple, changing axes defined by genre and circumstance [...]”

4 Koder (1990, 2018).

5 On this, see e.g., Page (2008).

scholarship notwithstanding.<sup>6</sup> *Rōmaioi* wrote in Greek and communicated predominantly in that language. Greek had been no less an “official” language of the ancient Roman Empire than had Latin, and by late antiquity its Greek-speaking population may be said to have been thoroughly Romanized.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Roman history and culture were well represented in Greek sources of antiquity, many of which were preserved for posterity by medieval Romans, i.e., Byzantines, who regarded ancient Roman history as their own and were conscious of an uninterrupted Roman tradition reaching back to the times of Romulus and beyond. This emerges clearly from their writings. The Republic is often neglected, as Byzantines seem to have associated more with imperial Rome, but it was still occasionally accorded considerable attention. In Komnenian times, this can be shown, for instance, by the example of Zonaras’s history or, more generally, by the admiration manifested for orators and politicians of the Republican period.<sup>8</sup> What it meant for broader strata of the Byzantine population to be Romans has been the subject of recent scholarly debate.<sup>9</sup>

The conclusion is that Romania held on to a Roman culture with respect to customs and institutions, as well as many other aspects. Accordingly, the hypothesis that Byzantines would not admit that they were Greeks<sup>10</sup> cannot be substantiated by means of the evidence that these alleged “Greeks” left to posterity.<sup>11</sup> Rather, this view is based on a non-Byzantine and modern construct that can be ascribed to two influential schools of thought. Based on this insight, whenever this book employs terms such as “Byzantines,” “Byzantine” or “Byzantium”—which it does not abandon for the sake of clarity and because they are so established in the field of Byzantine studies—they are to be understood as denoting medieval Romans, medieval Roman or the medieval (Eastern and Greek-speaking) Roman Empire respectively. Alternatively,

6 See Kaldellis (2013), p. 107: “The existence of a Greek-speaking, Orthodox living Roman Empire has not sat well with Western ideologies (at least since the ninth century), and the basis of Byzantine civilization has been systematically denied and distorted so as not to offend these sensibilities. Far from resisting this ideological distortion, many modern Byzantinists have in fact led the charge. Tu quoque, then.” See also Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 42ff.; Rapp (2008), p. 29.

7 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 64–69.

8 Irmscher (1996b), p. 524; Kaldellis (2007b), pp. 20, 300–301, 305–306 (Tzetzes’s appreciation of Cato), 62–63 (Attaleiates, Zonaras). For the importance attached to ancient Rome in Nikephoros Bryennios’s historical work, see Neville (2012).

9 Koder (2018), pp. 120–121, estimates that Romanness was something referred to in everyday language by the term “Roman,” but not so much a reflected identity for the average Byzantine.

10 Cf. e.g., Charanis (1978), pp. 88–89. Numerous other examples can be found in Kaldellis (2007a), p. 112 (n. 215).

11 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 42–43; Stouraitis (2014).



the source-based terms Romania, Roman or Romans are used, or Byzantine-Roman for the sake of emphasis or clarity.

The first source of the distortion of Roman identity is to be found in ancient and medieval times, when Latin and Western writers called Greek-speaking Romans “Greeks” in an effort to portray them as unworthy of the legacy of Rome and to ascribe to them unflattering characteristics which had already appeared in identical or similar fashion in ancient Latin literature.<sup>12</sup>

The second source of this view is the birth of Greece as a nation state in the nineteenth century. Greek nationalism led to a search for the continuity of Greek identity from ancient to modern times. The thoroughly Roman aspects of “Byzantium” were set aside to stress an alleged Greek core.<sup>13</sup> The historians of that period took up claims of Western, ancient, and medieval sources in a tendency to see Hellenes in medieval Romans, refusing to accept the consistent self-description of Byzantines of upper social strata as *Rōmaioi*<sup>14</sup> and the name given to their empire or πολιτεία (*res publica*):<sup>15</sup> “empire of the Romans” (βασιλεία τῶν Ῥωμαίων) or Ῥωμανία.<sup>16</sup> A much more plausible interpretation is that Byzantines in the long twelfth century—or at least those who shaped their extant literary evidence—were not Greeks who called themselves Romans, but Greek-speaking Romans.<sup>17</sup>

Equally doubtful is another view often expressed in older, and even in some newer, studies of Byzantine identities which aims to reduce the essence of being Roman to being an (Orthodox) Christian and a subject of the emperor.<sup>18</sup> The evidence leaves no doubt that *Rōmaiosynē* meant something else, or more, for higher social strata represented by the extant written evidence,<sup>19</sup> namely, adherence to a Roman culture consisting of many elements, such as the Greek

12 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 63–64.

13 Kaldellis (2007a), p. 44; also Krasberg (2017) for modern Greek identities.

14 See Page (2008), e.g., pp. 8–9, 47–48. Her distinction between ethnic and political Roman identity does not seem helpful, Kaldellis's approach in his review (2009b) of Page's book being preferable.

15 The two terms βασιλεία and πολιτεία were complementary, as the empire instituted by Augustus did not constitute a new polity (πολιτεία), but merely a new form of government. On the continuous importance of the idea of *res publica* or πολιτεία even for the lower strata of Byzantine-Roman society, see Beck (1970); Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 47–49, 61; (2013), pp. 14–15; (2015).

16 See Chrysos (1996), p. 16 (for the term *Rōmania*); Koder (1996), p. 4; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 42.

17 Kaldellis (2007a), p. 113.

18 E.g., Fögen (1993), pp. 49–50.

19 For a definition of upper social strata and the aristocracy in Romania, see Cheynet (1990), ch. 5; Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997), p. 129; Haldon (2009); Magdalino (2009a); Grünbart (2015), pp. 13–15.

language (also referred to as Roman language),<sup>20</sup> Roman customs, traditions, dress, institutions, faith, and so on. Accordingly, there could be Christian or even orthodox “barbarians”—Latins for instance—who did or did not serve the emperor, as well as non-Christian or heretical Romans, including ancient Romans.<sup>21</sup> The collapse of the polity in 1204 did have a major impact, but Byzantines still knew what it meant to be a Roman.<sup>22</sup> This is clearly at odds with the hypothesis that being a Christian subject of the emperor was sufficient for being perceived as a Roman. A more comprehensive articulation of Byzantine-Roman identities is therefore to be found within the historical evidence.<sup>23</sup>

A vivid and complex debate is going on in the scholarship concerning the characterization of Romania as a nation and its national identity or lack thereof. At any rate, even if one accepts arguments in favor of the use of such terms, the notion of a Roman or Byzantine “nation” or, depending on its definition, “ethnicity,”<sup>24</sup> inevitably implies modern associations that can be misleading and distorting. This is not to deny that there were certain types of nations or ethnicities in the Middle Ages, or that Romania might fit some definitions,<sup>25</sup> but instead, to avoid inherent modern associations, it may be more pertinent to speak of a Byzantine-Roman culture and ideology.<sup>26</sup> As Stouraitis has recently argued, this culture is represented in sources dominated by upper social strata. Although Kaldellis, in a recent book, argues that there are reliable and robust indications in the source material, the difficulty of assessing attitudes of the common population toward Latins ultimately also applies to questions of

20 In the middle period, “Roman” as a language could denote both Greek and Latin. See Cupane (2007), who concludes, however, that the adverb Ῥωμαϊστί referred to Latin without exception; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 114.

21 See Kaldellis (2007a), p. 75, who—rightly, at least with regard to Byzantine literati—stresses that what counted most was not the figure of the emperor or orthodoxy, but the πολιτεία, a “nexus of faith, law, history, custom, and language.”

22 Kaldellis (2019c), p. 273.

23 Laiou (1991), pp. 74–75; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 42–119 (esp. pp. 82–100); (2013), pp. 125–139.

24 Kaldellis (2007a), p. 5, can hardly avoid the danger of anachronism when he states that “Byzantium was [...] a nation-state like most modern nation-states, in this case the nation-state of the Romans.” Kaldellis’s reasons for calling Byzantium a nation are stated in Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 74–82; (2012a, 2017). For criticism of Kaldellis’s approach, see Koder (2012); Stouraitis (2014, 2017a, ).

25 On this aspect, see Kaldellis (2007a), p. 78.

26 Despite being broad and rather vague terms, “culture” or “ideology” have the advantage of being adaptable and more established for medieval and ancient history, and seem less misleading than the term “nation.” For a similar argument (with regards to avoiding the term “nation”), see Smythe (1992), p. 4.

national identities and ethnicity.<sup>27</sup> For this book, the choice was made not to analyze the image of Latins in terms of nation or nationalism because of the aforesaid problems, but this of course remains a possibility for future research.

But what of the alleged Greek or Hellenic identity of Romania? Hellenism generally—Hellenic knowledge, education (παιδεία), and insight—was an important feature of the self-identification and status of members of literary society, a distinguishing boundary marker and means to define insiders and outsiders or social rank and to acquire positions of power.<sup>28</sup> In the Komnenian period, Hellenism was largely confined to a small literary community, which would change only in the following century.<sup>29</sup> The beginnings of this development were witnessed by Niketas Choniates, the latest of the historiographers this book investigates. But having been socialized in the times of the later Komnenoi, his outlook remained a rather conservative Roman one. Choniates's Hellenism was still predominately literary, as was that of other historiographers of the twelfth century.<sup>30</sup> However, his perspective was influenced by the events of 1204 and their aftermath. This led Choniates and others to stress more strongly the Hellenic identity marker of their being Roman<sup>31</sup> in order to demarcate Byzantines in general, who were now more collectively described as Hellenes, from the Western conquerors, who also laid claim to *Romanitas*.<sup>32</sup> However, these “Hellenes” still identified predominantly as Romans in their writings, though they increasingly stressed the Hellenic aspect of *Rōmaiosynē*.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, Hellenism in its quality of opposition to or differentiation from Latins, especially Latin conquerors, was a frequent feature of thirteenth-century literature, but corresponding notions occur quite rarely in the sources of the preceding period. This is indicative of a general tendency in the scholarship to overestimate the importance of Latins with regard to the motivations behind Byzantine literature.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the distinction between

27 Stouraitis (2014), pp. 185–206; Kaldellis (2019c).

28 Smythe (1992), p. 97; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 236–237; Christis (2019), esp. p. 258.

29 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 225–316, esp. pp. 226, 232, 239–240, 283–295. According to Cupane (2007), p. 147, the terms Γραικός and Ἑλληγ became more sharply defined in the twelfth century, Γραικός occurring mostly in religious polemic and dogmatic literature (see *ibid.*, p. 151).

30 See Kaldellis (2007a), p. 321: “Choniates [...] was a product of the bloom of Komnenian scholarship.”

31 See Ch. 14, esp. pp. 370–371, 380, 382, 387, 389; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 341–343, 361.

32 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 74, 317–368 (for the period immediately following the conquest of 1204), 393; Rapp (2008), pp. 141–142.

33 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 345, 349.

34 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 295–301, esp. pp. 298–299. An interesting case is an unpublished oration written only shortly before the conquest, in which Nikephoros Chrysoberges (ca.

Romans vs. (quasi-)barbarians can be regarded as much more central to their preoccupations than Greeks vs. barbarians, even if this polarity gained traction during the twelfth century. This becomes more apparent in the novels of the period, and it is plausible that aristocrats identified to a degree with the polarity between the Hellenic heroes of the novels and antithetic barbarians, or non-Hellenes.<sup>35</sup>

Consequently, individuals and collectives that did not adhere to this Roman culture claimed by upper, highly educated social strata were typically described as inferior. In a religious context, *Rōmaioi* referred to themselves as God's Chosen People, following Israelite tradition,<sup>36</sup> and combined this association with a (late antique) Roman ideology propagating the supremacy of the empire's civilization, the Persian and Arabian Empires constituting special (diplomatic) cases in which a more flexible posture could be applied.<sup>37</sup> On the whole, a sense of the Romans' exclusivity and superiority is clearly apparent in the sources<sup>38</sup> and more specifically a sense of cultural superiority in the works of literati.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, it is hardly justified to speak of a "multi-ethnic" empire for the middle period insofar as there was just *one* predominant reference of political or cultural self-identification in Romania, at least for those represented in the written evidence, namely being Roman.<sup>40</sup> The polity, however, was multi-ethnic in the sense that Romanized provincial upper strata ensured the loyalty of several diverse peoples, such as Bulgarians, within the territory under imperial rule in the Komnenian period. Another indicator of the multi-ethnic character of the empire is that Komnenian and other emperors, following Roman tradition, aspired to expand their rule over or to be accepted as overlord by Hungarians, Latins in the crusader polities and Italy, Armenians in

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1160?–after 1213?) praises the empress Euphrosyne, the wife of Alexios III (1195–1203), "for being a Hellene of the Hellenes, without a drop of Latin blood" (*ibid.*, pp. 340–341, and n. 51).

35 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 256–270, esp. pp. 267–270, 288; Nilsson (2014).

36 Hunger (1984), p. 11; Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 112 (for the example of Manganeios Prodromos); Kaldellis (2007a), p. 62; Eshel (2018).

37 Schmalzbauer (2004), pp. 408–416; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 102.

38 Fögen (1993), p. 52; Schreiner (2011a), p. 183.

39 Beck (1978), pp. 11–13.

40 See Laiou (1991), p. 77: "The distinction between Roman and foreigner is not simply a statist distinction, it is also a cultural distinction, and becomes increasingly so in the course of the twelfth century." See also Kaldellis (2013), p. 125: "[Being Roman] is what set [the Byzantines] apart from the rest of the world. The fundamental Roman–barbarian polarity continued to operate in Byzantium even when the rhetoric of Christian ecumenism sought to cover it up for the purposes of propaganda speech." See also *ibid.*, p. 118; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 75.

Cilicia, and others.<sup>41</sup> It is notably because of this well-documented ambition that the term “empire” seems justified, also for medieval Romania, in addition to the continuity with the ancient Roman Empire, also with respect to terminology (βασιλεία).<sup>42</sup> Various ethnic identities play a subordinate role in literary sources, however.<sup>43</sup> At most, there might be vague ethnic regional *topoi*.<sup>44</sup>

The evidence strongly suggests, moreover, that one could relatively easily be integrated in the Byzantine world. It would therefore be misleading to represent Romania as a “xenophobic” society.<sup>45</sup> Being a relatively egalitarian polity, Romania not only allowed for the assimilation of provincial upper strata, but also considerable social mobility, contrary to developments in the West.<sup>46</sup> Individuals and groups who did not originally belong to the higher social strata could enjoy a relatively smooth integration, as long as they respected certain cultural standards, behaved as they were expected to as Romans, and could find patrons and supporters.<sup>47</sup> In the eleventh to twelfth centuries, Romania was in the process of becoming a more open society,<sup>48</sup> as the examples of Armenians, Latins, Turks, and others who settled in Romania and acquired high positions in the military or in the civil administration show. Some of

41 Stouraitis (2014), p. 214; (2018), p. 136.

42 The definition of empire presented in Kaldellis (2019c) seems unnecessarily narrow.

43 See Roueché (2000), p. 214, based on her study of ΚΕΚΑΥΜΕΝΟΣ, “Strategikon”; Monitory Oration: “Over many centuries, manuals of education and admonition—including one appropriately attributed to Isocrates—made Hellenism or Romanitas a condition which could be acquired; a cultural identity with no connection to ethnicity. It is this attitude which makes Byzantine texts so unhelpful to those modern politician-scholars who have tried to mine them for support for fictitious modern identities for the pernicious—and now, we hope, moribund—construct of the nation-state.” See also Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 54, 82–100, esp. pp. 86–87, where he argues that ethnic inclusiveness was always a basic characteristic of the Roman polity throughout its history and that while there was racial prejudice, it evaporated in the face of successful integration, and pp. 92ff., where he concurs with Roueché in the “fundamentally cultural definition of Roman national unity.”

44 Kaldellis (2007a), p. 96.

45 Thus Hunger (1984), p. 12; similarly Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), esp. pp. 170–185. See also Laiou (1991), pp. 87–88; Kaldellis (2019c), chs. 4 and 5. Given the well-reasoned arguments made by these Byzantinists, it is curious that, in spite of ample evidence to the contrary, some scholars still bring up notions of “the general Byzantine suspicion of anyone or anything foreign” (Nilsson and Scott [2007], p. 326) without even allowing for doubt.

46 On this *ισοπολιτεία* and social mobility in Romania, see e.g., Beck (1978); Hunger (1984), p. 17; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 241, 348; (2019c), p. 125; Ludwig (2013).

47 Laiou (1991, 1998a); Chrysos (2003). Magdalino (2000a), p. 155, identifies the aristocratic household as a possible medium by which (Byzantine and non-Byzantine) outsiders could become insiders in the capital.

48 Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), esp. pp. 177–180.

these migrants founded families who became fully integrated;<sup>49</sup> they could even aspire to the throne.<sup>50</sup> Even so, Greek literature of the period suggests a remarkable lack of interest in other cultures compared to, for example, late antique sources.<sup>51</sup> These individuals were obviously expected to conform to a degree to *Rōmaiosynē*.<sup>52</sup> This is not to say that there wasn't opportunity for pluralism under Byzantine rule, e.g., for Latin churches, monasteries, or other religious institutions, or a mosque in Constantinople. However, like the ancient Roman Empire, medieval Romania was capable of “absorbing” non-Romans, and assimilation to identity markers of a Roman, deemed superior, was taken for granted, even if it was not always complete, ancestry and origin being relatively unimportant.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, difficulties appear to have existed with individuals and collectives who were temporary rather than permanent residents. These groups—e.g., merchants or crusaders in the long twelfth century—were initially uncertain of their status and rights compared to Byzantines, and could be unwilling to integrate into the political and judicial structure, leading to tension and conflict.<sup>54</sup>

This book generally avoids terms such as “foreign(er),” “stranger,” and similar terms in the Byzantine context as they are almost inevitably associated

49 From the second generation it was possible to call them Romans by birth (γένος), on which see Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 88, 91. For the special case of Armenians, see indicatively Kaldellis (2019c), ch. 5, with further references.

50 See e.g. Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), esp. pp. 170–185; Laiou (1991), esp. pp. 91–97; Magdalino (1996), pp. 35–36; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 91–93, who remarks that the mechanisms of integration and acculturation have not been studied enough. See also Jeffreys (1984), pp. 203–204, who summarizes the situation quite convincingly, although it is a matter of course that there were more factors involved than just Orthodoxy: “Byzantine society was one that was always receptive to men of ability, whatever their origins, providing that they became Orthodox” (p. 203).

51 This will be addressed below, pp. 33–35.

52 See Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), p. 196: “Despite the economic and political pressures on the Byzantines to become integrated into the European system in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the traditional prejudices against foreigners persisted.” On the expectation to conform to Roman norms and learn Greek, see Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 92–93; (2013), p. 127. Laiou (1998a), pp. 165–178, emphasizes that the same law applied to everyone in principle (except for the Jews until the reign of Manouel I, see pp. 162, 168–171), but that Byzantines were willing to take into account other customs for reasons of political expediency or self-interest, oaths according to the religion of the people in question for instance (p. 170). In fiscal matters, particular arrangements could be made for certain groups, while everyone was regarded as under the emperor's authority (pp. 178–181).

53 Lilie (1995); Kaldellis (2019c), ch. 4.

54 See Laiou (1994), esp. pp. 87–88; (1998a), pp. 171–177 (on the legal situation of the Venetians in Romania and the attempts of the government to integrate them in the political order). See also the first section of Ch. 2.

with modern, distorting concepts, particularly concerning the modern nation state. Moreover, an evaluation of Byzantine terminology confirms the ambivalence and complexity which characterize the image of Latins in particular. One could be a foreigner, stranger, or outsider in many different respects and to varying degrees. There were manifold and complex markers indicating foreignness, outsider status, or otherness, such as language, customs, or dress. It appears that in many cases it was possible to recognize an ethnic difference by clothing, but clothing also marked other differences, often in social status. Moreover, there are indications that clothing styles became more diverse in the long twelfth century, with the inclusion of non-Byzantine fashion elements, and it is hard to estimate how often Westerners could be recognized by their dress. Certain individuals and groups, such as the Venetians, would also adopt a Byzantine clothing style.<sup>55</sup> Foreignness or otherness was a multifaceted, varying and mutable rather than an absolute status, dependent on context and perspective.<sup>56</sup> The presence in the empire of such groups and individuals could be varied: they might be integrated by force, e.g., in the form of resettlement, remain for a brief time (merchants, pilgrims, crusaders), reside in Romania temporarily (e.g., Italian merchants), or remain permanently (e.g., mercenaries). Others, such as exiles, migrants, or nobles from abroad, might stay for an undetermined period.<sup>57</sup> An illustration of this complexity is the rich and fluid vocabulary used to describe such groups or individuals, and it appears that there was a lack of clear-cut definitions.<sup>58</sup> The word ξένος, for instance, could have various meanings and connotations, positive as well as negative, e.g., “marvelous,” “extraordinary,” “guest,” or a Byzantine from another part of the empire unfamiliar to the local population. Moreover, the term could be used in a religious sense.<sup>59</sup> The word ἀλλότριος more clearly designated a non-Byzantine foreigner and sometimes an enemy; ἀλλόφυλος, ἑτερόφυλος, and ἀλλόγλωττος meant “from another people” and “speaking another language.”<sup>60</sup> The term ἔθνικός, initially used for pagans, was also applied to Romania’s Christian neighbors, standing for a different political allegiance or origin. While the *ethnē* could be peoples inside or outside the empire, ἔθνικοί, ἑξωτικοί, or οἱ ἕξωθεν would usually be Byzantines from

55 Kaldellis (2019a).

56 Jouanno (1992); Odorico (1993); Smythe (2000); Durak and Jevtić (2019), esp. introduction. See also Introduction, pp. 5–9.

57 Lilie (1995).

58 See the introduction to Durak and Jevtić (2019), esp. p. 4.

59 E.g., in relation to Christ or in a monastic context; see Odorico (1993); Prinzing (1997).

60 Laiou (1991); Prinzing (1997); Ahrweiler (1998); Rickelt (2015).

outside the capital. The process of adopting Byzantine cultural standards (language, religion, political affiliation, culture, way of life, etc.) was referred to as ἑλληνίζειν or ἐξελληνίζειν. There were intermediate levels of assimilation or acculturation occupied by “half-barbarians” or “half-Greeks,” as in the sense of poor Greek speakers (μιξοβάρβαροι, μιξέλληνες).<sup>61</sup> As for the word βάρβαρος itself, it was certainly used predominantly in a negative sense reaching back to ancient times. However, the status of barbarian was not immutable but could be overcome by adopting Byzantine markers of identity. It, like the aforesaid concept of half-barbarian, could also be applied to Byzantines, e.g., as an insult. Such terms were also applied in certain contexts and by certain authors, but not by others. Thus they did not necessarily designate foreigners, as understood today, but also competitors, provincials, or groups of a (supposedly) lower social or educational status.<sup>62</sup>

A characteristic that should be addressed in connection with a Byzantine sense of superiority is “universalism,” a key element of collective identity. The claim to rule over the Christian οἰκουμένη was an important element of the ideology of the Roman *politeia* (the *res publica* presided over by the emperor) and was never abandoned<sup>63</sup>—at least not officially. It was still relevant in a certain way for literate higher social strata and plausibly for larger parts especially of the capital’s population in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, given the strong presence of imperial representations there.<sup>64</sup> But while it still served as an

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61 Prinzing (1997).

62 See esp. Ch. 8; Koder (2018), p. 112, for the example of Tzetes referring to inhabitants of Byzantine islands in terms of foreign barbarians.

63 See Kaldellis (2007b), p. 15: “Another moment of greatness, with which the Byzantines identified even though they knew that it was irretrievably lost, was the reign of Constantine [I] and the period of the ecumenical Christian empire in general [...]” See also Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), p. 167; Fögen (1993), p. 49; Schmalzbauer (2004), esp. pp. 417–419. For the concept of “begrenzte [limited] Ökumene,” see Lounghis (1995), although Schmalzbauer’s general assessment of Byzantine ecumenical ideology seems more convincing. For the concept of οἰκουμένη more generally, see Koder (2002c); Chrysos (2005).

64 See e.g., Magdalino (1996), p. 18, who sees Emperor Michael VII’s (1071–78) policy vis-à-vis the Latin West as well as the Syriac and Armenian East as an integral part of Christian and Roman ecumenical ideology. For the situation under the Komnenoi, especially Manouel I, see for instance Magdalino (1993b), pp. 23–24, 419–422, 460–462 (on Manouel’s notion of imperial restoration). One of the most distinct manifestations of ecumenism can be seen in the conciliar edict of 1166, in which Manouel lays claim to the late antique empire of Konstantinos I, see Mango (1963). For the views, ideologies, and political power of the common people of Constantinople in the long twelfth century, see for instance Garland (1992); Kaldellis (2015).



important element in the justification of (re)conquering territories and ruling over various peoples, it did not hinder Byzantine pragmatism and *realpolitik*.<sup>65</sup>

Accordingly, if Ioannes Kinnamos (ca. 1143–after 1185) laments the imperial pretensions of Frederick Barbarossa (ca. 1122–90), this might reflect irritation about the Western entanglement in Romania's affairs to an unprecedented degree and a sense of threat resulting from the military potential of Western powers (Barbarossa's in particular), as well as the experience of past aggression.<sup>66</sup> As long as there was no apparent direct threat, the Byzantines generally seem to have felt comfortable with ignoring rival claims, because they considered them either irrelevant or as something that could be corrected at some indefinite point in the future.<sup>67</sup>

A more prominent marker of identity, at least for literary society and the city's inhabitants, was the capital itself. Constantinople was the empire's only metropolis from the seventh century on, and the most important place of reference for most Komnenian (as well as earlier and later) literati,<sup>68</sup> especially before the end of the twelfth century when a provincial outlook becomes more evident in the sources.<sup>69</sup> This phenomenon reflects the political turmoil and provincial emancipation of the period.<sup>70</sup> That said, "New Rome" came to symbolize culture, civilization, and refinement. One had to be a Constantinopolitan, or at least be based in Constantinople, in order to acquire the highest social standing.<sup>71</sup> With some justification, the capital city can be described as the single most important geographical reference of Byzantine identity in the sources. However, it should be noted that being Roman, albeit strongly associated with Constantinople, was still not strictly bound to physical location, as the aftermath of 1204 would illustrate.<sup>72</sup> Certainly, this did not diminish the important role that the city of Konstantinos undoubtedly played for many Byzantines, particularly from the later seventh century. Its unique

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65 Schmalzbauer (2004), pp. 416–417; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 105–106. See also *ibid.*, p. 102: " 'Universalism' in practice was [...] a promise, a once and possibly future ideal that did (and could do) nothing to disrupt the national [sic] basis of Roman identity."

66 See esp. Chs. 9–13.

67 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 100–111.

68 For the abundant praise of Constantinople in Byzantine Greek sources, see e.g. the material presented by Fenster (1968).

69 See Mullett (1984), p. 173; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 322–323, who cites Michael Choniates (ca. 1138–1222).

70 On this, see Brand (1968); Lilie (1984b); Cheynet (1990), esp. pp. 427–473; Angold (1997), pp. 295ff.

71 Ahrweiler (1975), p. 67, refers to this as "polarisation constantinopolitaine."

72 Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 61, 80–82, 367–368.

standing becomes even more pronounced in the sources of the twelfth century and the period shortly before and after 1204.<sup>73</sup> Constantinople gradually became the place where the majority of the politically and economically powerful were based and ownership of their resources was concentrated. In Komnenian times, good birth (εὐγένεια) and Constantinople as the source of it were emphasized. Constantinople was the place to be, and where the “Roman people” (γένος Ῥωμαίων) was truly at home.<sup>74</sup> Accordingly, even non-Constantinopolitan *Rōmaioi*, i.e., mainly provincials, could be portrayed as different, as “others,” outsiders, or associated with various degrees of barbarism. That said, it must not be assumed that provincial identities were necessarily less Roman than those of the capital.<sup>75</sup> As can be seen, the sources draw distinctions other than Christian vs. pagan, Latin or barbarian vs. Roman or Hellene, and there are many shades of gray between these polarities. However, many Komnenian Byzantine writers may have felt the need to distinguish themselves from all those whom they intended to disparage as inferior outsiders, not so much out of contempt, but as a result of the importance of exclusive status and rank in their social environment.<sup>76</sup>

Long before the period under consideration, the city of Constantinople had been associated with apocalyptic and prophetic concepts. Such concepts were a major marker of Byzantine as well as Western identities and attitudes and influenced Byzantine-Latin relations, notably during the passage of the crusades, in which apocalyptic concepts concerning Islam and its destruction, Constantinople, Jerusalem, the last world empire, and the last and messianic emperor were also influential. While Western concepts did involve rule in Constantinople, they did not explicitly include military conquest or war with the Byzantines, and the evidence suggests that most of the leaders of the crusades between 1096 and 1191 as well as the rank and file did not favor it, even though some argued in favor of such ideas at times.<sup>77</sup> There were Byzantine prophecies and fears, however, about the red-haired or “blond peoples” (ξανθὰ ἔθνη), military forces from the West, or barbarian peoples more generally,

73 Magdalino (2000a), pp. 159–160.

74 Magdalino (2000a), p. 160; Nilsson (2014), pp. 199–209.

75 While the contempt expressed by many literati for provincials and life in the provinces is clearly apparent, the evidence does not necessarily suggest a hostile attitude toward a provincial origin, many literati having a provincial background themselves. It can rather be taken as an affirmation of status, crucially important during the long twelfth century. See Magdalino (2000a), pp. 149–151; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 322; (2019c), p. 58; Beyer and Grünbart (2011), pp. 173–175; Tremblay (2014).

76 See Magdalino (1984b), pp. 65–66; (2000a), pp. 149–151; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 236–237.

77 See Chs. 10–12.

around the idea that they would capture the imperial city or that their troops would at least enter it before being repelled. This of course had to do with the fact that Constantinople was threatened and besieged at various times by various adversaries from the beginning of Byzantine history until the Komnenian period. Moreover, there is evidence that certain Byzantines regarded or represented crusades as the fulfillment of such prophecies. That said, the evidence, while indicating that prophetic predictions could be an important factor in decision-making and shape perspectives, does not suggest that they were the crucial factor in shaping these relations, including during the events of 1203–4. Prophecies would often turn out to be ambiguous and deceptive rather than precise predictions. Niketas Choniates expresses skepticism, particularly regarding predictions that involved astrology, displaying a belief that men and rulers possess free will, that divine providence does not make choices in their place, that God helps those who help themselves. According to this concept, none of the crusades were bound to lead to an assault on or the capture of Constantinople, but their favorable or unfavorable outcome could be influenced by the Byzantines. Apart from a phase during the Third Crusade, also involving political motivations,<sup>78</sup> nothing indicates that Byzantine emperors and their advisers believed in the necessary realization of prophetic predictions of an assault on or the capture of Constantinople by a crusade. More generally, while their attitudes appear to have remained flexible, the relative silence of Byzantine intellectuals on eschatological matters from the eleventh century would suggest a growing skepticism or indifference according to Magdalino.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, while it remains a possibility for certain social strata of the Byzantine population, there is no good reason to assume that the Byzantines generally adhered to a teleological or fatalistic belief in a disastrous outcome of their relations with the West.<sup>80</sup> As will be shown, there is ample evidence to the contrary.<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, it is a dangerous hypothesis that literati were very much concerned with Latins or non-Byzantines more generally when composing their

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78 See Ch. 2, p. 101, and Ch. 12, pp. 353–355.

79 Magdalino (2007a), p. 58.

80 Angold (2003), pp. 59–60, 66–69; Magdalino (2005, 2007a, 2007b, 2009b, 2021); Kraft (2021). For an overview of eschatological concepts in Byzantium and the West, see Flori (2007b).

81 The intensification of Byzantine-Western interactions during the long twelfth century, including numerous political alliances, hardly indicates firm beliefs in a disastrous outcome. For the prominent example of Choniates's suggestion that the events of 1203–4 were far from being the necessary result of previous relations with the Latin world, see Ch. 14, p. 381.

works. As recently shown by Kaldellis, one of the most apparent features of Byzantine literature of the long twelfth and earlier centuries is the generic character of representations of other peoples. Only very rarely do the sources dwell on original aspects of non-Byzantine cultures. Kaldellis discusses the reasons for this development in Greek literature in detail.<sup>82</sup> It is sufficient to say here that it was closely related to the severe blow that was dealt to the empire by Arab invasions from the second third of the seventh century on. These led to a massive and enduring territorial contraction of the empire and a focus on internal matters or introspection, as one might call it.<sup>83</sup> “Barbarians” were mentioned in most cases only if they entered into direct contact with the Byzantines.<sup>84</sup> Also, in connection with this, late antique modalities were abandoned in literature, undergoing manifold changes.<sup>85</sup> Histories seem to have been confined to relatively brief and concise annals. This changed only from the ninth century, when education and literature took new forms, particularly under the Macedonian emperors and their successors. More oriented toward late antique models, this development culminated in the extremely influential oeuvre of Michael Psellos (1017/18–ca. 1076).<sup>86</sup> However, the generic character of representations of other peoples prevailed, both in the histories and other genres. The sophisticated historiographical works that were composed during the eleventh and twelfth centuries—whether panegyric or critical—concentrated more or less exclusively on their own environment, especially the emperor, the aristocracy, and the court.<sup>87</sup> Accordingly, it is particularly important to always ask what message the discussion of non-Byzantines conveys to the audience about their own society, e.g., what a source means in terms of social order (*taxis*) and social distinction or stratification.<sup>88</sup> The same is true for late antique literary works, even if they engage more extensively and openly in the actual discussion of the culture of non-Roman peoples, thereby

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82 Kaldellis (2013), esp. pp. 26–81.

83 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 72–81; see also Lounghis (1980a), pp. 458–481; Schreiner (1992), p. 554.

84 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 99–100.

85 See Hunger (1978), esp. vol. 1, pp. 331ff., and other sections on the literature of the “dark centuries,” Haldon (1990), esp. ch. 11; Speck (1996), pp. 34–37; Kaldellis (2010), p. 214, who draws attention to the discrepancy between the history of Theophylaktos Simokattes (early seventh century, close to 300 pages on the period 582–602, Attic prose) and of his continuator Nikephoros (late eighth century, some 70 pages on the period 602–769, comparatively simple style).

86 Hunger (1978); Speck (1996), pp. 37–43; Rapp (2008), p. 139; Neville (2018), ch. 19. For Psellos’s influence on Komnenian writers and Hellenism, see Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 227–228.

87 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 48–56.

88 Smythe (1992), esp. ch. 7; Kaldellis (2013), p. 117. See also below, pp. 39–43.

demonstrating a “humanistic” interest in “others.”<sup>89</sup> It is not only the scarcity of original information on other peoples in literary sources of the middle period that suggests more knowledge was available than they would indicate.<sup>90</sup> Romania had an elaborate diplomatic system and a comprehensive administration that relied on written accounts. Most probably, there were detailed records of non-Byzantine peoples, but they have not survived and were hardly put to use in literary works, possibly because they were not easily accessible, but probably chiefly as a result of the aforementioned developments of the seventh century.<sup>91</sup> In addition, it has been observed that the historiographers of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries simply pursued differently oriented goals. Psellos, Attaleiates, and Choniates were more concerned with commenting in a more or less critical fashion on their own society, especially that of the court and the capital, whereas other literati such as Anna Komnene, Bryennios, or Kinnamos focused on the glorification of an imperial hero or the enhancement of the prestige of their respective families.<sup>92</sup> Ethnographic digressions served mainly to illustrate and contextualize the imperial narratives; they were not a major motivation behind them.<sup>93</sup> This observation does not imply that historiographical and other literary works do not contain or reflect information on, views of, and attitudes toward “others,” or that they were not influenced by relations with them, but it was not their primary purpose.

It would be a fruitful approach to compare this assessment to Western medieval literary works. With regard to the West, similar introspective tendencies have been observed.<sup>94</sup> However, they appear to be less pronounced if one takes into account indications of a certain interest and orientation toward Byzantine cultural elements and the Greek language which remained without a comparable Byzantine counterpart during the twelfth century. Such indications were the interest of Western scholars in Greek literature and translations thereof during the twelfth century or Byzantine cultural and artistic influence in the West.<sup>95</sup>

89 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 1–25.

90 Kaldellis (2013), p. 56.

91 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 26–33. This assessment naturally applies only to mainly upper social strata with direct or indirect access to the said records. The knowledge that the masses, especially in the provinces, had of Westerners and other non-Byzantines probably tended to be limited and vague, as argued, for instance, by Kolia-Dermitzaki (1991a), p. 185.

92 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 52–55.

93 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 96–98.

94 Goetz (2008), esp. ch. IV.F.

95 See Berschin (1988), esp. ch. 11; Bianconi (2004); Chiesa (2004); Nelson (2005); Carrier (2012); Nilsson (2014), for the plausible lack of Western influence on Byzantine novels; Rodriguez Suarez (2014, 2016).

Another crucial debate revolves around imitation (μίμησις) or emulation, and the immensely influential model character that classical and late antique literature represented for Komnenian authors. Many literary works employ the classicizing and archaizing language that took classical and late antique literature as its touchstone. This extends notably to ethnonyms. Numerous scholars have attributed a “reverse anachronism” to these literary works, suggesting that they distort the present by making it (artificially) seem like the past.<sup>96</sup> This outlook, however, must be relativized, as it has too often been accepted without critical examination and sound evidence.<sup>97</sup> Kaldellis’s approach or that represented in the recent volume edited by Hinterberger on literary (learned) language in Romania are more plausible and can be supported. They argue that Byzantine literati made use of the heritage of antiquity in an independent, conscious way which underlines the relevance of what they have to say of their own times.<sup>98</sup>

Before turning to historical works and other sources, and their representation of Westerners, it is useful to take a closer look at the stratum of society that was most involved in literary production and to consider some of the central preoccupations of Komnenian literature, which reflected the outlook of members of literary society generally.

The production of Byzantine literature should be imagined—based on a schema developed by Margaret Mullett<sup>99</sup>—as a highly complex process involving the literatus, writer or author, his patrons (commissioners as well as dedicatees), audience or readership, as well as the following factors: composition, reception, (oral) delivery, audience reaction, commission, dedication, criticism, and “publication.”<sup>100</sup>

An obvious and difficult question in this context is the degree to which literary production was affected by the social changes brought about by Komnenian rule, namely what has been described as the militarization and “aristocratization” of Byzantine society. Clearly, it became especially prestigious to be of good or noble birth (*eugeneia*)<sup>101</sup> and a member of the new

96 See e.g., Mango (1975).

97 Kaldellis (2007b), p. 21. An example would be Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), pp. 168–169.

98 Kaldellis (2013), pp. 103–104, 106–117; Hinterberger (2014); Spanos (2014); Kaldellis and Siniosoglou (2017), ch. 7.

99 Mullett (1984), p. 179.

100 See also Nilsson (2014), esp. pp. 161–169.

101 Importantly, *εὐγένεια* and its opposite (*δυσγένεια*) had a variety of meanings for the Byzantines in this period, and aristocratic birth was just one of them. On this, see Magdalino (1984b), pp. 63–66; Grünbart (2015), pp. 28–32. It is interesting, however, that this concept is indiscriminately applied to Westerners as well, as will become apparent in subsequent chapters.

Komnenian aristocracy with the emperor and his clan at the center.<sup>102</sup> This development also manifested itself in a new and elaborate structure of titles and social ranks.<sup>103</sup> As Kazhdan and others have shown, the aristocratic values of the period (and indeed other periods) are reflected in, as well as being reflective of, imperial ideals. Two attributes became extremely influential in Komnenian times: nobility of birth and military prowess.<sup>104</sup> Although they were not uniformly stressed, they were brought up often by imperial panegyrists such as Theophylaktos of Achrida (ca. 1050–after 1126), Theodoros Prodromos (ca. 1100–ca. 1158), and Ioannes Kinnamos (after 1143–after 1185). Kazhdan ascribes this to the general trend of “aristocratization” of the period.<sup>105</sup> This is also reflected in literary heroes such as Digenes Akrites, a figure to whom the emperor was compared.<sup>106</sup>

Questions remain, however, over the precise relationship between the literati and their patrons, often representatives of the military aristocracy. What is certain, at least, is that both patrons—to a certain degree—and writers engaged in rhetorical and philosophical activity and that literati usually had more than a single patron.<sup>107</sup> There certainly were various kinds of literary gatherings,<sup>108</sup> in particular the so-called *θέατρα* or *σύλλογοι*,<sup>109</sup> in which literature was performed, and in which members of literary society interacted

102 Magdalino (1996), p. 34 (incl. n. 127). For a general treatment of the “Komnenian system,” see Lilie (1984b); Magdalino (1993b), esp. pp. 180–227; as well as literature cited by Kaldellis (2007a), p. 233, n. 23.

103 See Magdalino (1984b), p. 64, who also draws attention to another characteristic of the use of *eugenēs* and *eugeneia*: “It is striking, too, how consistently Byzantine historians from Choniates to Cantacuzenus use the terms *eugenēs* and *eugeneia* to apply to people who combined Comnenian lineage (or descent from a foreign royal dynasty) with high office and kinship or ‘familiarity’ (*oikeiotēs*) with the reigning emperor.”

104 On military prowess and (Pseudo-) “Homeric” war ethos, see Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 242–244.

105 Kazhdan (1984), esp. pp. 45–52.

106 On the comparison of Emperor Manuel to Digenes Akrites in imperial panegyric, see Magdalino (1989, 1993a); (1993b), pp. 1–2, 127, 421, 449; Roueché (2000), p. 201 (incl. n. 16); Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 248–249.

107 Mullett (1984), p. 181.

108 See Mullett (1984), p. 176: “[...] it seems likely that our theatra were only one of many gatherings where reading aloud or declamations occurred, from the sewing circles of ladies complete with spiritual father through the reading aloud of saints’ lives at meals, the performance of speeches to the emperor in front of a *kyklos* or *choros* to the reception (dying out at this time) by congregations of new hymns and sermons.”

109 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 335–356; Grünbart (2007); (2011), p. 218 (including literature cited in n. 46); Marciniak (2007); Gaul (2011), esp. pp. 17–53 (evidence from the Palaiologan period).

with this literature and each other, and some of these places must have been strongly representative of an aristocratic lifestyle. In this way literary works were shaped by the feedback of an audience.<sup>110</sup>

Much is still unknown concerning the personal ties between the people who constituted literary society in Romania.<sup>111</sup> Interactions can only be established by a complete network analysis, insofar as the evidence allows their reconstruction.<sup>112</sup> In some cases, the evidence is too vague to determine a link or its nature,<sup>113</sup> and questions remain concerning the “social mechanisms” in operation. More particularly, the influence of patrons on literary works continues to be an open question.<sup>114</sup> For the moment, it is safe to say that the people involved in literature constituted “a profoundly interconnected literary society, not a series of disconnected publics.”<sup>115</sup>

A certain influence of patronage is noticeable, yet the literati retained considerable control over their own compositions. Furthermore, Romania’s social stratification remained relatively fluid in Komnenian times, and the interest of aristocrats in patronage created new opportunities. Literati were by no means merely the voice of the court or the aristocracy, or even of cultivated aristocrats.<sup>116</sup> Magdalino tentatively characterizes their relationship with patrons as ambiguous: composing a commissioned work could be represented as an honor or as a restriction of freedom, even if it is difficult to determine in each case whether this honor or restriction is merely a topos or reflective of a genuine feeling. There were certainly many grounds for tension and conflict between members of the new aristocracy and some of the literati who did not belong to their social stratum.<sup>117</sup> Komnenian authors began to understand writing as

110 Magdalino (1984a), p. 95; Cavallo (2006), esp. ch. 6; Nilsson (2014), ch. 1 and pp. 161–169.

111 Mullett (1984), p. 183.

112 Mullett (1984), pp. 182–183; Smythe (1992), p. 101.

113 Magdalino (1984a), p. 95.

114 On this, see Kaldellis (2007a), p. 235.

115 Mullett (1984), p. 183, and p. 186: “While I am aware that there is no such thing as a single homogenous and listening public, Komnenian conditions are suitable for the application of Goldmann’s approach in *Le dieu caché*, where there is far more than a minimal consensus, or to put it another way, where the horizon of expectation is common to the whole of a work’s readers ‘in the historical moment of its appearance’ [...] Komnenian literature, its producers and receivers, were part of a single social organism.”

116 Mullett (1984), pp. 185, 187.

117 See Magdalino (1984a), p. 95; (1984b), pp. 66–69, where he stresses certain grounds for tension between Komnenian aristocrats and writers (insofar as they were not identical). For instance, civil aristocrats, such as Niketas Choniates, may have felt like a secondary aristocracy, their political influence being comparatively limited. Thus, many were probably more interested in their own “showing off” (ἐπίδειξις) rather than serving the interests of their patrons. Zonaras’s criticism of Komnenian rule under Alexios I is an example



a profession and thus to form a group of their own, while the overwhelming majority still had other occupations and their social origins were far from being homogenous.<sup>118</sup> Mullett sums it up in the following manner: “It seems to me that a great deal of what is new in twelfth-century literature can be explained by patronage, but a great deal can only be explained within individual writers or within a corporate set of values, perhaps encouraged by *theatra*.”<sup>119</sup>

While this assessment is certainly valid, it is safe to assume a strong social link between authors of Komnenian literature and the aristocracy, and this applies to the majority of the historiographers discussed in this book.<sup>120</sup> It is a plausible hypothesis that, similar to Komnenian aristocrats, many literati saw themselves as a cultural aristocracy, and due to the patronage aspects of their social environment their “elitism” became inseparable from that of the court. Few individuals constituted an exception to this rule—at least for part of their lives.<sup>121</sup> Magdalino puts it in a nutshell:

In general, it can be said that Byzantine intellectuals tended to identify with the court and despise the common people. Moreover, this tendency became more marked with the establishment of the Comnenian clan as the official nobility. The aristocratic values of the imperial elite were proclaimed in literature not only by some of its own members—Nicephorus Bryennios and Anna Comnena in the twelfth century, Andronikos Palaiologos and John Cantacuzenus in the Palaeologan period—but also by a host of other writers, among them Niketas Choniates, whose obsession with noble birth and military prowess is as remarkable as his

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indicative of the awareness of imperial officials, also expressed by Choniates and others, that the new regime had reduced their influence and power and that family connections were appreciated more than their merits. On this, see Fögen (1993), p. 48; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 233–234.

118 Mullett (1984), pp. 181–182; Nilsson (2014), ch. 1.

119 See Mullett (1984), p. 182, who brings up an illustrative example: An aristocratic lady could commission a romance, but only those with the necessary wit and refinement (*ἀσταιότης*) and with an understanding of rhetorical pleasantries (*κομψά*) would fully appreciate contemporary allusions and aspects of parody. The boom of satire and literary parody in the Komnenian period may in part be ascribed to the taste of literati, the same holding true for the origin of romances (Mullett agrees with Kazhdan on this point). See also Kaldellis (2007a), p. 247, who draws attention to the idea that authors were quite capable of satirizing and praising patrons simultaneously.

120 A summary of their biographies will be given below.

121 Magdalino (1984b), p. 66.

violent contempt for tradesmen and for the rabble of Constantinople in general.<sup>122</sup>

The affirmation of rank and status which went along with the dominance of the corresponding values and insistence on *paideia* (classical literary education) has been associated with “snobbery” by Paul Magdalino, who brings up the affectation of social exclusiveness as a possible definition of the term. There was no single and exclusive definition of social status or criterion for social stratification in Komnenian Romania, but such status could be measured by birth, education, rhetorical skill, wealth, acquired rank, profession, as well as other characteristics. However, the evidence does not necessarily suggest that certain groups and individuals felt “snobbishly” insecure with regards to their position in society.<sup>123</sup> Magdalino defines two basic (modern) categories of snob: “aggressive parvenu snobs” uncertain of their reception in the social environment they are associated with or aspire to belong to, and “defensive snobs” who have acquired a relatively high standing, but feel challenged or threatened. Caution is advised in applying these anachronistic categories to Romania in the twelfth century. Additionally, the concept of *ἰσοπολιτεία* (equal citizenship) is important to consider, even if the appreciation of aristocratic birth is apparent in the source material.<sup>124</sup>

Perhaps the most important personal quality or marker of identity to distinguish oneself socially was what can be translated as “wit,” “charm,” “suavity,” “sophistication,” “civility,” or literally “urbanity”: *ἀστειότης*.<sup>125</sup> This *asteiōtēs* was associated with Constantinople, Byzantium’s capital also in terms of culture, before all other cities and places in the world.<sup>126</sup>

One of the most important identity markers associated with *asteiōtēs* was refined speech and language. These were crucial indicators of social status and group membership in Romania. Although literati such as Ioannes Tzetzes were able to master various registers of style,<sup>127</sup> it was their command of the highest register that constituted their exclusive status and social

122 Magdalino (1984b), p. 66. Smythe (1992), p. 80, is even more to the point: “The many will always be outsiders to the Byzantine elite [...]”

123 Magdalino (1984b), p. 58.

124 See Magdalino (1984b), p. 60; see also below.

125 These translations are proposed by Magdalino (1984b), p. 70. According to Beyer and Grünbart (2011), a rough equivalent of *asteiōtēs* in the medieval West can be seen in *urbanitas*.

126 Beyer and Grünbart (2011). On the association of *asteiōtēs* with Constantinople, see. *ibid.*, p. 174.

127 Kaldellis (2007a), p. 238.

distinction,<sup>128</sup> or, in other words, the quality of their Atticism and *paideia*.<sup>129</sup> In the Komenian period, the ability to speak and write well (εὐγλωττία) was greatly valued, as a crucial identity marker denoting social rank. Rhetoric, similarly, ought to be understood in a broad sense in the context of this book, without any of its common pejorative connotations, namely as the art of speaking or saying something well and appropriately, also in written form (literary works were often read aloud). Rhetoric was of the utmost social importance, and likewise, in connection with it, aurality and performance. Rhetorical education, according to the handbooks and traditional models, was thus a matter of course for every aspiring intellectual and anyone pursuing a career in the imperial or patriarchal administration in a competitive environment.<sup>130</sup> With regard to negative portrayals, whether of Byzantines or non-Byzantines, the ψόγος was influential, i.e., the artful construction of vituperation or invective. It should be taken into account when dealing with such negative portrayals, therefore, that they were also engaged in for the sake of the literary or rhetorical enjoyment they brought and do not necessarily reflect negative feelings or attitudes, at least not to the degree that might be suspected at first.<sup>131</sup> Negative portrayals can also sometimes be identified as humorous malice—the twelfth century has been described as a golden age of Byzantine humor.<sup>132</sup> Importantly, applying as it does to the image of Latins in historiography, rhetoric also included the art of conveying contradictory standpoints on the same topic, e.g., using hyperbole.<sup>133</sup> Conversely, a mere oblique suggestion could be

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128 See Smythe (1992), p. 97 (with regards to Psellos, Anna Komnene, and Niketas Choniates); Beyer and Grünbart (2011), p. 180, argue that vernacular elements won acceptance in the highest social and literary strata in the twelfth century, but also that to write in the highest linguistic register remained an indispensable feature of social distinction. See also Grünbart (2011), pp. 225–226 (incl. n. 85), who draws attention to the importance of accomplished speech for aristocrats, as emphasized, for instance, by Kekaumenos in the pre-Kommenian period (*ibid.*, pp. 228–229).

129 Kaldellis (2007b), p. 20.

130 Van den Berg (2018), esp. pp. 219, 227. See also Jeffreys (2003), esp. the contributions by Michael Jeffreys, Ljubarskij and Mullett; Karla (2007); Nünlist (2012).

131 Marciniak (2008), pp. 130–132.

132 On irony, mockery, satire, and humor in Byzantine literature, see Garland (1990); Haldon (2002); Ljubarskij (2003, 2004); Marciniak (2008); Braounou (2014, 2016), based on a research project conducted at the University of Vienna and supervised by Claudia Rapp; Alexiou and Cairns (2017) with many further references. See also Kaldellis (2012b, ) for the case of the *TIMARION*, ed. and trans. Romano (1974); trans. Baldwin (1984).

133 Hunger (1978), vol. 1, pp. 65–74; Mullett (1984), p. 183; Smythe (1992), ch. 3; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 335–356; Stone (2007); Grünbart (2011), esp. pp. 220–231; (2019), p. 29; Kaldellis and Siniossoglou (2017), ch. 6 (by Papaioannou).

a very strong statement, which highlights the need to read between the lines. Literati often played with the multiple meanings of words.<sup>134</sup>

Approaches toward and concepts of truth or truthfulness are also of interest. Distortion and deception could be acceptable under certain circumstances, even praiseworthy if (morally) instructive, plausible, of high literary quality or used in service of a greater good.<sup>135</sup> It was not uncommon to engage in dissimulation and irony: to say something and mean something else.<sup>136</sup> The ideal orator and literatus would bear all this in mind, weighing and arranging every word prudently.<sup>137</sup> While literary and rhetorical authorities and models were immensely important, this rich rhetorical repertoire also encouraged the creative, individual agency of each author.<sup>138</sup> All of these factors make any investigation of high-style Byzantine literature a demanding but fascinating and fruitful endeavor. They are also a warning against overly simplifying and generalizing interpretations which, as briefly explained in the state of research and as will be shown throughout, are rather frequent in studies of the image of Latins. Such interpretations are also influenced by dubious assumptions about supposed mental limitations of historical people.<sup>139</sup>

Broader strata of the population did not necessarily share these literary concerns and interests. They and other preoccupations of upper social strata are clearly over-represented in the sources.<sup>140</sup> In addition to what has already been said about this orientation of the source material,<sup>141</sup> it is worth noting that the permeation of concepts and attitudes in society generally may have been somewhat stronger than in the West, with the possible exception of Italy, because literacy was probably more widespread and considerable value was attached to it. In connection with intellectual pursuits and the virtue of *euglōtia*, there was a more general appreciation of reading texts aloud, with particular emphasis on the fundamental role of the voice as instrument, which in turn was closely linked to that of rhetoric and performance. Documents such as imperial chrysobulls would be read aloud to a large public. It was also in this

134 Neville (2018), pp. 22–23.

135 Kaldellis (2009a), pp. 76–77; (2014), esp. pp. 118–120; Van den Berg (2017); Neville (2018), pp. 24–25, with further references.

136 Kaldellis (2009a), p. 77; Braounou (2014, 2016).

137 Van den Berg (2018), p. 235.

138 Papaioannou (2014), esp. p. 24.

139 Kaldellis (2007b), esp. p. 2.

140 Certainly, some authors were members of a social “aristocracy” in a relative sense only, and represented themselves as such or aspired to be respectively.

141 See Introduction, pp. 7–8.

way that the content of books, which were relatively costly, was known to a larger circle of people than the mere number of books would suggest.<sup>142</sup>

That said, representations of attitudes and opinions of broader strata or the majority of the population remain much more elusive compared to those of the upper strata more directly represented in Byzantine historiography, which is why the latter are the focus of this book.

## 2 The West and Westerners in Greek Literature: Historiographers of the Komnenian Period and Other Sources

Literature of the Komnenian period was marked not only by a renewal of historiography but by literary, cultural, and political innovations, although Treadgold rejects the notion of a “Komnenian Renaissance/Revival” as it was not preceded by a period of cultural decline.<sup>143</sup> Besides historiography, oratory, poetry, religious writings (which constituted the bulk of the literature),<sup>144</sup> novels (a revived genre in the twelfth century), and other types of literary works have been preserved. These categories are by no means strict of course but serve only as a loose orientation to facilitate an overview of the source material. The norms of genres should be regarded as guidelines rather than rules and were treated creatively by Byzantine literati.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, literary experiments and transgressions of boundaries between genres by increasingly self-confident and self-aware authors were characteristic of the period.<sup>146</sup>

Historians of the long twelfth century were heirs to a development that had set in a few years previously. Around 1060, both the number of historical works produced and their audience expanded due to urbanization and a growth in schools, although the sphere Atticism reached remained relatively

142 See Browning (1978, 1993); the contributions by Horrocks and Cavallo in Cavallo (2004); Oikonomides (2005), sections on language and literacy; Cavallo (2006), chs. 4, 6, 8, 12; Kaldellis and Siniossoglou (2017), ch. 2.

143 Treadgold (2013), pp. 387, 480–482.

144 Interestingly, however, there is comparatively little hagiography. See Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), esp. pp. 71–75, 82–83, 111–117, 123–124, 131–143; Mullett (1992), p. 238; Paschalidis (2011).

145 See e.g., Kazhdan and Constable (1982), pp. 92–116 (arguing that modern Byzantine Studies should focus on the historical environment, individuality, and peculiarities of authors rather than genre); Mullett (1992, 2006); Hörandner (2003); Neville (2018), p. 15. On the “genres of historiography,” see Afinogenov (1992).

146 Pizzone (2014); Van den Berg (2018), p. 229, with further references.

limited.<sup>147</sup> Based on the number of manuscripts, world chronicles concerned exclusively or mainly with remote times—such as those of Georgios Kedrenos, Konstantinos Manasses, Ioannes Zonaras, and Michael Glykas—enjoyed greater popularity than contemporary historiography. The number of manuscripts, however, can serve only as a rough indicator; writers such as Choniates or Michael Psellos may indeed have been considered more refined and competent than, for example, Kedrenos, even if world chronicles were presumably read more frequently.<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, it should be noted that “all the histories [of the Byzantine period] are evidence mainly for the interests of a modest-sized elite who took history seriously, liked to read it, and sometimes wrote it.”<sup>149</sup>

For the early Komnenian period (1081–1118), there is a certain lack of contemporary historiography. Anna Komnene’s father had apparently made it illegal to produce historiographical accounts of his reign, or at least refused to commission one, as she claims in the *Alexiad*. Another reason for the absence of contemporary accounts of the reign may be found in the relative estrangement of Alexios’s new regime, which relied more on the military aristocracy, from the educated officials who had composed histories in the preceding period.<sup>150</sup> The circumstances seemingly did not change much under Ioannes II (1118–43), but Zonaras and Bryennios began composing histories that included the life and reign of Ioannes’s father Alexios I. After Anna and Zonaras, modern scholars are confronted with a certain gap in Greek historiography between ca. 1150 and ca. 1175–80. Glykas’s history, roughly datable to ca. 1170, makes no additions of its own to the Komnenian period. The first historical works that described the reign of Ioannes II were only composed thirty (Kinnamos) and fifty years (Choniates) after his death in 1143. Kinnamos and Choniates, both born after Ioannes II’s death, offer only relatively short summaries of the reign in their histories. This lack of detailed contemporary historiography is somewhat compensated for by other sources, such as imperial panegyric or non-Greek evidence. By contrast, the histories concerning Manouel I Komnenos and his successors are chronologically closer to their authors, who were sometimes eyewitnesses to the events they described.<sup>151</sup>

147 Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), pp. 31–39 (urbanization), 120–126 (growth of schools); Mullett (2006); Treadgold (2013), p. 309.

148 Treadgold (2013), p. 483. For “Byzantium’s historiographical audience,” see Croke (2010); Neville (2016b), p. 276; (2018), p. 17.

149 Treadgold (2013), p. 487.

150 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, xv.11.1, p. 494 (25–29); Treadgold (2013), pp. 343–344.

151 The historiographers of the later Komnenian period were eyewitnesses to the reigns of the following emperors whose rule they describe in their histories (and orations).

To avoid a distorted perspective on the outlook on the West and Westerners represented in the histories, it is useful to ask first and foremost what motives were most influential in their composition. The more recent scholarship on Byzantine historiography rightly emphasizes the importance of treating the historical works as literary works and “cultural artifacts.” The neglect of this aspect has often led to distortion and misconceptions.<sup>152</sup> Crucially, the Latin West as a subject for consideration does not appear to have been a primary motivation for historical writing. Byzantine-Roman history is always the central theme, even in the case of Choniates, who witnessed the Latin capture of Constantinople. But then again, the preservation of past occurrences, often the alleged main preoccupation in the histories themselves,<sup>153</sup> was not the primary motive either, even if it may have been an important one to some historiographers, especially in the dimension of moral instruction and the transmission of values and models to their intended audience.<sup>154</sup> Interestingly, the superficial treatment of Latins in the works that cover the Komnenian period only briefly (Zonaras and Glykas) may be more reflective of Byzantine perceptions than those of Anna, Choniates, Eustathios, and Kinnamos. Such an assessment is supported by the probability that the histories of Zonaras and Glykas (alongside the verse chronicle of Manasses) were more popular, given the high number of manuscripts.<sup>155</sup> In the case of these histories, a desire—for instance on the part of a patron—to obtain a more concise, more entertaining, or simpler summary of the empire’s history was relevant.<sup>156</sup>

A main motive for writing seems to have been an outlook on the past with implications for the present that the literati meant to propagate. For instance, Anna Komnene made use of her father’s image, which she cultivates in the *Alexiad*, to assert her own claim to the throne and criticize the emperors who

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Kinnamos: Manouel I (albeit not the earlier part of his reign); Eustathios: Manouel I, Alexios II, Andronikos I; Choniates: Manouel I (from ca. 1164), Alexios II, Andronikos I, Isaakios II, Alexios III, Alexios IV, Alexios V, Theodoros I (Nicaea).

152 Nilsson and Scott (2007). See also Magdalino (2002); Lilie (2014); Neville (2018), pp. 17–18.

153 See Odorico (2006), p. 151, with regard to Eustathios. The said preoccupation is similarly expressed in the prologues of the *Alexiad* and the *Historia / χρονική διήγησις*: ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, I, 1, p. 5 (6–9); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, I (5)–2 (33). See also: NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.*, p. 73 (3–5); Grigoriadis (1998b); Zorzi (2012), pp. 8–11 (on Choniates’s *προοίμιον* and *προοίμια* more generally, with further references).

154 Neville (2016b), esp. pp. 273–275; Neville (2018), pp. 17–18.

155 Hunger (1978), vol. 1, pp. 418 (Zonaras), 422 (Manasses), 426 (Glykas).

156 MICHAEL GLYKAS, *Hist.*, pp. 3 (4)–4 (3); IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Dindorf (1868), I, p. 4 (6–16). See also Hunger (1978), vol. 1, pp. 416–417, 423. Grigoriadis (1998b), p. 341, observes that many works before the Komnenian period present it as a virtue and desirable goal to write concise, useful, and implicit histories.

succeeded him.<sup>157</sup> In addition, for Anna,<sup>158</sup> as for other Byzantine authors, an important motive was to establish, consolidate, or enhance a claim to literary fame, even while explicitly denying such pretensions or expressing a supposed inadequacy of style.<sup>159</sup> It is often asserted in Byzantine προοίμια (introductions) that previous histories or chronicles were inadequate for a variety of reasons. This of course implies that the historiography in question is superior or more appropriate.<sup>160</sup> Writing was not yet a profession, but it carried considerable social prestige.<sup>161</sup> In certain cases, explanations for imperial decline were sought, such as in Choniates's case and in that of Michael Attaleiates (ca. 1030–ca. 1085). This was accompanied by a tendency to criticize and mock emperors and other fellow Byzantines. A possible reason for Eustathios of Thessalonike to give an account of the conquest of Thessalonike may have been to justify his conduct in that recent event to the new regime in Constantinople.<sup>162</sup> Zonaras,<sup>163</sup> Nikephoros Bryennios,<sup>164</sup> and others may have been persuaded to undertake historiographical writing. To stress that the impulse came from others, however, has been identified as a topos in *prooimia*. Caution is advised in assessing this factor.<sup>165</sup>

## 2.1 *Historiography*

### 2.1.1 Anna Komnene

Anna Komnene (1083–ca. 1153) is one of the few Byzantine women who have left writings to posterity and Romania's only known female historiographer. Her *Alexiad* (Ἀλεξιάς)<sup>166</sup> is a major source for the reign of her father Alexios I

157 Magdalino (2000c); Stephenson (2003).

158 On Anna's literary ambition, which is apparent already in the *prooimion*, see Grigoriadis (1998b), pp. 334–338.

159 See Grigoriadis (1998b), pp. 328–329 (Psellos), 338 (Manasses), 339–340 (Choniates); IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Dindorf (1868), I, p. 5 (29–32): “But if the style varies and is not entirely homogeneous, no one shall wonder and accuse either the narrative or me, its father [author]” (εἰ δ' ὁ χαρακτήρ τοῦ λόγου ποικίλλεται καὶ μὴ δι' ὄλου ὁμοίός ἐστιν ἑαυτῶ, θαυμαζέτω μηδεὶς μηδέ τις τὸν λόγον αἰτιῶτο ἢ τὸν τούτου πατέρα με).

160 Grigoriadis (1998b), pp. 331–333, 341–343. On *prooimia*, more generally, see also Lilie (2014), p. 162, n. 20.

161 Kaldellis (2010), p. 213. For the rise of professional literati such as Tzetzes and Theodoros Prodromos in the Komnenian period, see Kazhdan and Constable (1982), p. 102.

162 Odorico (2006), pp. 160–172; Kaldellis (2010), p. 213; Messis (2011a), p. 160.

163 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Dindorf (1868), I, pp. 4–8; Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 416.

164 Hunger (1978), p. 396.

165 Grigoriadis (1998b), pp. 328, 342.

166 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, ed. Reinsch and Kambylis (2001). There is also an excellent translation by Reinsch: ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch (2001). See also the English



Komnenos (1081–1118), albeit strongly influenced by her agenda.<sup>167</sup> The bibliography on Anna and her *Alexiad* is extensive;<sup>168</sup> the circumstances of its composition are important factors in its representation of Latins.

The *Alexiad* narrates events that took place, or it is claimed took place, decades before it was composed. Anna informed her audience about a past she experienced partially herself—she was a mature woman of thirty-five at her father's death—but it was a distant past which Anna recollected some thirty years after her attempted usurpation following her brother Ioannes's succession to the throne.<sup>169</sup> It is useful to keep in mind, therefore, that the *Alexiad* is also reflective of the mid-twelfth century context of its composition.

Anna composed “a generic hybrid in which historical writing is merged with literary traditions drawing from epic poetry and monodic discourse”<sup>170</sup> glorifying her father, herself, and members of her family.<sup>171</sup> Another apparent motivation was to criticize, sometimes explicitly, if cautiously, her brother Ioannes II and her nephew Manouel I. Anna likely felt that they threatened to surpass the memory of her father and herself by the representation of their rule in

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translation by Sewter and Frankopan (2009) and the Italian translation by Agnello (2010). For the metaphrase of the fourteenth century, see Davis (2010).

- 167 Even if she emphasizes the truthfulness of her account. Obviously, the concepts of truth in Byzantine historiography were different from modern concepts, see p. 42. Even if, as noted by Reinsch and Kambylis (ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., p. 7\*), the *Alexiad* was never revised entirely, the varying degrees of precision and carefulness of research that can be traced in the narrative may still be said to point to Anna's interests and priorities. She alleges limited access to sources in Book XIV.6–7, pp. 452(52)–453(79), but other evidence strongly suggests that she enjoyed greater freedom than the *Alexiad* claims: see ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., p. 5\*, Karpozilos (2009), p. 407; Treadgold (2013), pp. 360–366. Given Anna's agenda, it can be hypothesized that she did not wish to investigate matters of little interest to her, so she defended herself with the aforesaid claim, which she may have deemed somewhat credible because of her withdrawn life. Moreover, Anna has little to say about her brother Ioannes, and what she does say is very unflattering. It can be assumed, therefore, that she describes the punishment for revolting against her imperial brother as harsher than it was.
- 168 Gouma-Peterson (2000a); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 397–425; Treadgold (2013), pp. 354–386; Lilie (2013); Riehle (2014); Sinclair (2014); Neville (2016a); (2018), ch. 25; Garland (2017), and the scholarly work cited there, notably Buckler (1929) among the older studies. See also Buckley (2014) with the justifiably critical review by Riehle (2015) as well as Constantinou and Meyer (2019), esp. the contribution by Constantinou.
- 169 Hill (2000).
- 170 Riehle (2014), p. 256.
- 171 On the “Homeric” war ethos embraced by Byzantine literature during Anna's lifetime, see Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 242–244. On the parallels between Ἀλεξιάς and Ἰλιάς (*Iliad*), see Karpozilos (2009), p. 397.

imperial media, notably panegyric.<sup>172</sup> The *Alexiad*, supported by Anna's testament, therefore implicitly argues that she was the true heir to Alexios. It is an attempt to overturn a version of history that would diminish the accomplishments of her father—and perhaps more importantly—marginalize her and her husband's memory. It is plausible that Anna not only felt entitled to two domains dominated by men—high education and the composition of historiography—but also to imperial rule (shared with her husband).<sup>173</sup> Anna's gender is thus an important factor in the *Alexiad*, but its precise influence must be evaluated with caution.<sup>174</sup> In addition to the *Alexiad*, a testament, of which

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- 172 See e.g., Magdalino (2000c); Stephenson (2003). As shown by Reinsch (2013), among others, the *Alexiad's* portrayal of its hero has an encomiastic tendency while the indirect portrayal of his successors Ioannes II and Manouel clearly has an ironic dimension in that Alexios's virtues and successes are often implied to be their vices, shortcomings and failures. The *Alexiad* was written in the context of encomia that praised Manouel and Ioannes II for surpassing their father and grandfather. See also ANNA KOMNENE, *HIST. XIV.7.5–6*, pp. 452(56)–453(79), where she says that because she composes her historical work during the reign of her father's grandson, all flattery and embellishment are now disconnected from her father since everyone flatters the current occupant of the throne. This brings about her “factual” reporting of the occurrences of Alexios's reign. She also expresses her grief over the passing of her husband and parents, her brother going unmentioned. Moreover, *Book XIV.3.6*, pp. 436(90)–437(5), speaks of a general lack of gratitude for Alexios's many accomplishments, without mentioning anyone by name, and likewise *XIV.3.9*, p. 438(34–43), where she makes an unfavorable comparison between Alexios and those who ruled after him, something that appears to have been too delicate under these successors and was thus altered in a version of Anna's work, as observed by Reinsch (1990), p. 247.
- 173 Neville (2016a, 2019b) argues against this interpretation, but insufficiently takes into consideration several factors and arguments that do not support her view. For example, the absence of Anna's name and that of Ioannes II's rebellious brother Isaakios from the list of family members who are to be commemorated in the *PANTOKRATOR TYPIKON*, pp. 41–47, is noteworthy especially in combination with the allusion to the emperor's hostile relatives (*PANTOKRATOR TYPIKON*, p. 29 [11–13]). See also Gautier (1969), p. 242; Mullett (2006); Riehle (2014); Dionysios Stathakopoulos's introduction to Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez (2016), p. 6; Simpson (2018). Anna was willing to engage in another activity—historiography—that was regarded as the domain of men and the *Alexiad* portrays contemporary imperial women with power and influence with whom Anna likely identified. In addition, there can be little doubt that she was aware of earlier precedents of such women, in some cases even ruling in their own right and without an emperor, albeit briefly. See Quandahl and Jarratt (2008), pp. 310–311. Anna's case must also be put in the context of the generally ample evidence for the aspirations of many aristocrats for the Byzantine throne and their concern for the status of their families under the Komnenoi, demonstrated among others by Lilie (1984a); Cheynet (1990); Grünbart (2015).
- 174 Her personal emotional insertions, for example, are not simply an expression of gender, but build on the model of Psellos and are a literary and rhetorical device to add variety

only the preface survives,<sup>175</sup> and a funerary oration by Georgios Tornikes, one of her protégés,<sup>176</sup> reflect her intellectual interests and literary patronage and complement information given by the *Alexiad* and sources outside of Anna's influence.<sup>177</sup>

### 2.1.2 Ioannes Kinnamos

It was only around the end of Manouel's reign that contemporary histories were composed. The so-called *ἐπιτομή* by the imperial secretary Ioannes Kinnamos (shortly after 1143–after 1185) constitutes an important source offering an additional perspective on the reign of Manouel I. Manouel and his father are never explicitly criticized in what amounts essentially to a long encomium (*ἐγκώμιον*). It may have been commissioned by Manouel himself or composed in the hope of gaining his favor, but the project was certainly completed, or abandoned, after the emperor's death, mentioned in the *prooimion*. There is no conclusive evidence to determine whether the original included a description of Manouel's last years or whether it terminated with preparations for the campaign against the Turkish Seljuks in 1176, as do the extant manuscripts.<sup>178</sup> The encomiastic tendency of Kinnamos's history makes his portrayal of Latins no less interesting. Their favorable and unfavorable portrayal in the history seems to reflect somewhat Manouel and his entourage's approval and disapproval of various Westerners and their behavior in pursuing the emperor's strongly Western-oriented political agenda. Accordingly, the portrayal of Latins, while not representing an exception to the generic trend of Byzantine literature,<sup>179</sup>

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to the history, make it livelier and more engaging. See Quandahl and Jarratt (2008), esp. pp. 316–320; Constantinou (2019).

175 ANNA KOMNENE, Will, ed. and trans. Papaioannou (2012).

176 GEORGIOS TORNIKES, Works, ed. and trans. Darrouzès (1970), pp. 220–323; Browning (1990).

177 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., pp. 4 (83)–8 (92), 10 (37)–12 (93). See also THEODOROS PRODROMOS, Historical Poems, no. 38, Prodromos's oration on the occasion of the marriage of Anna's sons (edited and translated by Gautier in the appendix of his edition of NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, Hist., pp. 340–355) and the *TYPIKON OF THE THEOTOKOS KECHARITOMENE*, ed. and trans. Gautier (1985), which Gautier dates to ca. 1110 (first part) and the 1120s (second part). It makes provisions for Anna and was commissioned by her mother Eirene Doukaina.

178 Treadgold (2013), p. 409, thinks that Kinnamos, who certainly composed his history at least in part after Manouel's passing, mentioned in the *prooimion* (p. 4 [14–15]), had every reason to conclude with that event. However, if it was indeed a work commissioned by Manouel, as Treadgold himself suspects, why would Kinnamos have finished the history under the regents for Alexios, who may not have been very interested in it or had more pressing concerns?

179 See above, pp. 33–35.

does include some original discussions that serve mainly to illustrate the main imperial narrative.

Kinnamos's history is preserved in a deficient version with respect to the original.<sup>180</sup> By contrast with Anna Komnene, the bibliography on Kinnamos is modest, although his history has received a considerable degree of attention, especially in the context of the history of Hungary and the crusades.<sup>181</sup> Besides the history, Kinnamos wrote a short rhetorical work, the ἡθοποιία, which is one of many testaments to the interest of literati of the Komnenian period in ancient Greek literature.<sup>182</sup>

### 2.1.3 Eustathios of Thessalonike

Eustathios of Thessalonike (ca. 1115–ca. 1195) enjoyed an excellent reputation as a classicizing literatus and rhetor, which allowed him to make a successful career in the patriarchal administration. Relatively late in life, he became bishop of Myra, but shortly thereafter he exchanged that see for the archbishopric of Thessalonike, to which he was elevated in ca. 1175/80. Having been driven into exile in ca. 1191–93,<sup>183</sup> he remained archbishop until his death in 1195 or 1196.<sup>184</sup> Among historians, he is well known for his work on the Sicilian conquest of Thessalonike (1185), which he refers to as a “report” (συγγραφή).<sup>185</sup> It constitutes only a small part of his extensive oeuvre: sermons, commentaries on Pindar, Dionysios Periegetes, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a treatise on monasticism, letters, and orations, among them imperial panegyrics. Some of his orations are of interest to this study as they contain interesting portrayals of Westerners. These portrayals are highly influenced by the genre and were designed to serve imperial propaganda. Eustathios's orations often hint at historical events in an allusive manner, as other imperial orations of the period typically do.<sup>186</sup> The history, albeit marked by the fresh experience of

180 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, ed. Meineke (1836); trans. Brand (1976).

181 Ljubarskij (2000); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 625–641; Lilie (2009); Gallina (2013); Treadgold (2013), pp. 407–416; Neville (2018), ch. 26 (stating that Kinnamos usually portrays Latins in an unfavorable light, which is a misleading observation without proper contextualization).

182 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Ethopoiia*, ed. Bánhegyi (1943).

183 Kazhdan and Franklin (1984), pp. 134–135; Angold (1995), pp. 189–190; Schönauer (2005).

184 For Eustathios's life and works, see, inter alia, Wirth (1980); Kazhdan and Franklin (1984), pp. 115–195; Browning (1995); Angold (1995), pp. 179–196; Metzler (2001, 2006); Karla (2007); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 664–690; Treadgold (2013), pp. 416–421; Odorico (2017); Pontani, Katsaros and Sarris (2017); Van den Berg (2017, 2018); Neville (2018), ch. 30. See also EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone (2013), with Stone's introduction and references to his many publications on Eustathios's oratory.

185 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, ed. Kyriakidis, p. 4 (3); Treadgold (2013), p. 418.

186 Stone (2001).

the conquest of Thessalonike and often making use of many standard topoi, offers a differentiated approach toward Latins, especially if one reads between the lines and contextualizes negative assertions. His work generally suggests that Eustathios held nuanced views on many topics and people, including Westerners.<sup>187</sup>

Eustathios's "report," written in an elaborate prose, is available in a critical edition and has been translated into several modern European languages.<sup>188</sup> The state of editions of his orations, however, is mixed. A selection has been critically edited by Peter Wirth, an expert on Eustathios's work.<sup>189</sup> While other smaller writings are accessible only in old editions,<sup>190</sup> several works have been edited relatively recently.<sup>191</sup>

#### 2.1.4 Niketas Choniates

Niketas Choniates (ca. 1155–1217)<sup>192</sup> is perhaps the most interesting and fruitful object of study for the present purposes. This well-known literatus and imperial official composed his historiographical work both before and after the fall of his city, Constantinople, to the Latin conquerors in 1204. The transmission of manuscripts containing different versions of his χρονική διήγησις or *Historia* allows modern researchers to differentiate between various stages of its composition. The versions of the history sometimes contrast significantly. Plausibly, four versions can be identified, but their exact number depends on one's manner of counting.<sup>193</sup> The changes chiefly concern emperors and other Byzantine individuals, but sometimes the portrayal of Westerners as well. The *Historia* was probably composed from the latter half of the 1190s until shortly before the author's death in 1217.<sup>194</sup> The early version, which covers

187 See Browning (1995).

188 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, ed. Kyriakidis, trans. Rotolo (1961); trans. Hunger (1967); trans. Melville Jones (1988); trans. Odorico (2005).

189 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, ed. Wirth (2000).

190 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Opuscula*, ed. Tafel (1832).

191 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, commentary on Pindar (*prooimion*), ed. Kambylis (1991); Letters, ed. Kolovou (2006); Treatise on Monasticism, ed. Metzler (2006); Commentary on Homer's *Iliad*, ed. Van der Valk (1971–87); Commentary on Homer's *Odyssey*, ed. Stallbaum (1825–26); ed. and trans. Cullhed (2016); Funeral Oration, ed. and trans. Bourbouhakis (2017). See also Laografika, ed. Koukoules (1950). For Eustathios's theological writings, see Beck (1959), pp. 634–636.

192 For his date of birth, see Van Dieten (1971), pp. 18–20, for his date of death, see Katsaros (1982).

193 Van Dieten (1998); Simpson (2006); (2013), pp. 68–127; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 189.

194 Simpson (2006), p. 200; (2013), pp. 69–70, 76–77.

events from the accession of Ioannes II (1118) to the time shortly before the Fourth Crusade (1202), is divided into imperial reigns, each consisting of one or several books, and offers a roughly chronologically structured history of the Byzantine Empire from the perspective of a high-ranking civil aristocrat based in Constantinople during the reign of Alexios III Komnenos Angelos (1195–1203). The later versions are influenced by the events of 1204 and the author's exile (lo-version, ca. 1204–07), then by his hopes for a career at the court of the Nicaean emperor Theodoros Laskaris (b-version, ca. 1207/early 1208), and finally the experience of a relatively impoverished man in Nicaea who frequently and bitterly laments his loss of wealth and status, to a significant degree caused by the Latin conquest (a-version, ca. 1213–17).<sup>195</sup>

The history's representation of Westerners might come across as extremely defamatory in certain passages when looked at in isolation and taken at face value. The history's complex rhetorical structure defies an overly simplifying and literal interpretation not just of the representations of Latins. Negative assertions that seem to apply to all Latins in general, for example, are often in the context of major events such as the conquest of Thessalonike and, of course, that of 1204. These assertions need to be compared to differently oriented passages, the portrayal of other individuals and collectives, and placed in the context of the *Historia's* introspective motivations and rhetorical approach.<sup>196</sup> Choniates's narrative is marked by *topoi*, remarkably heterogeneous, and not infrequently seemingly contradictory. The historiographer's work thus needs to be understood in context to make sense of apparent contradictions. The representation of Latins is usually linked to that of *Rōmaioi* and a narrative of Romania's decline as Choniates makes use of Westerners for his portrayal of emperors, other individuals, or, collectively, fellow Byzantines.

In addition to the history, other surviving works by Choniates deal with Latins. These include his letters from after 1204 and a few orations, composed between the reigns of Isaakios II Angelos (1185–95) and Theodoros I Laskaris (1204–22).<sup>197</sup> Furthermore, the Latin Church receives a theological treatment in his *Πανοπλία δογματική*, a lengthy doctrinal work begun before but finished after 1204. It is based on a work of the same name composed by Euthymios

195 Van Dieten (1998); Simpson (2006), p. 216; (2013), pp. 76–77; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 189. On the question of whether Choniates's friends made alterations, see Neville (2018), p. 220.

196 For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature of the period, see above, pp. 33–35.

197 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Oration/Letters*, ed. Van Dieten (1972). Choniates's letters from the period before 1204 seem to be lost in their entirety.

Zigabenos in ca. 1100.<sup>198</sup> The secondary literature on Choniates and his works is rich.<sup>199</sup>

The critical edition of the historical work, carefully compiled by Jan-Louis Van Dieten and published in 1975, was a substantial improvement compared to the nineteenth-century Bonn version. However, debate on the interpretation and grouping of the manuscripts has continued since the publication of Van Dieten's edition, with the editor himself participating in the debate, conceding imperfections partly due to constraints imposed by the publication format.<sup>200</sup> A new edition would be heartily welcomed.<sup>201</sup> Modern translations of the history are equally marked by difficulty: fascinating, verbose, with an extremely developed style, Choniates's literary treasury frequently allows for diverse and sometimes contradictory interpretations.<sup>202</sup> Franz Grabler rendered Choniates's prose into German elegantly. However, there are several issues with this translation from the 1950s. It is not based on the Van Dieten edition, and is sometimes unfaithful to the Greek. The English translation by Magoulias is often inaccurate and should always be checked against the Van Dieten edition and other translations.<sup>203</sup> A recent Italian translation has successfully redressed this issue. The translation includes a valuable commentary by the translator Anna Pontani, and Riccardo Maisano.<sup>204</sup> It is complemented

198 See the partial editions of the *Πανοπλία δογματική*: NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Πανοπλία δογματική*, ed. Van Dieten (1970), ed. PG 139, cols. 1101–1149/140, cols. 9–281, and Bossina's studies on it (2004, 2006, 2009b, 2009c). See also Van Dieten (1970); (1998), p. 139; Simpson (2013), pp. 36–50.

199 See among others and in addition to the aforesaid studies: Van Dieten (1971, 1994, 1999); Tinnefeld (1971), pp. 158–179; Hunger (1978), vol. 1, pp. 429–441; Asdracha (1983); Magdalino (1983); Kazhdan and Franklin (1984), pp. 256–286; Leven (1991); Maisano (1992, 1994); Kazhdan (1995a, 1995b, 1997); Schmitt (1997); Bossina (2000, 2009a, 2009c); Harris (2000, 2001); Todt (2001); Conca (2002); Ljubarskij (2004); Angelov (2006); Efthymiadis (2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2012); Page (2008), pp. 72–93; Roche (2008); Bourbouhakis (2009); Demosthenous (2009); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 699–770; Simpson and Efthymiadis (2009); Angelou (2010); Littlewood (2007, 2010); Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010b); Berkes (2011); Spyropoulos (2011); Zorzi (2012, a useful commentary on the first eight books of the history); Beihammer (2013); Lilie (2013); Treadgold (2013), pp. 422–456; Kuttner-Homs (2017); Neville (2018), ch. 32; Urbainczyk (2018).

200 Van Dieten (1998), p. 138; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 202.

201 Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 202.

202 Choniates, albeit a particularly prominent case, is representative of the characteristic complexity of Byzantine rhetoric, see pp. 41–42. See also the studies cited above, Conca (2002) in particular.

203 See Van Dieten (1986), a very critical review of Magoulias's translation; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 185.

204 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, ed. Van Dieten and Maisano, trans. Pontani (1994–2017). The latest, revised edition of the first volume (November 2017), also includes a new

by that of Niccolo Zorzi which discusses the first books covering the reigns of Ioannes II and Manouel I.<sup>205</sup> The Pontani translation constitutes the first reliable translation of Choniates's work into a modern language based on the Van Dieten edition. Alicia Simpson has thankfully highlighted the considerable differences between versions of the history, which Pontani appreciates in her commentary.<sup>206</sup> Given the difficulties of the Greek and the crucial importance of Choniates as a historical source, a faithful translation of all the versions of the history is still a *desideratum*, especially for non-Byzantinist scholars with a limited knowledge of Greek.

Finally, the question of whether Choniates knew Kinnamos's history needs to be addressed. There is no conclusive evidence, but there are good arguments in favor of Lilie's hypothesis that the similarities between the two works are based on the employment of common sources. It should not be surprising that such similarities exist in two literary works written by contemporaries and presumably both in Constantinople. They both deal with the reigns of Ioannes II and Manouel I and employ identical sources. Furthermore, a few events reported and accordingly deemed relevant by Kinnamos—Lilie brings up occurrences in Cyprus and the crusader polities as an example—were omitted altogether by Choniates, if indeed he made use of his contemporary's history. He may have known Kinnamos personally, as the history suggests, but this may not signify much, and the acquaintance may well have been superficial. Nevertheless, Simpson and Treadgold, among others, have recently argued without hesitation that Kinnamos was used by Choniates. Unfortunately, they do not respond to Lilie's valid arguments; Treadgold does not even quote them. Choniates's statement in the *prooimion* which implies a lack of knowledge of any other history devoted to the rulers after Alexios I ought to be taken seriously since there is no compelling reason to reject it. It is not even known if Kinnamos's work was circulated during his lifetime. The possibility remains, however, that Choniates did use Kinnamos's work but considered it a draft.<sup>207</sup>

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commentary by Pontani. Wherever the earlier edition is quoted in the present study, it was not deemed necessary to refer to the more recent one instead. For the metaphrase of the history (fourteenth century), see Davis (2009).

205 Zorzi (2012).

206 Simpson (2006), supported by Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), pp. 190–191.

207 Magdalino (1993b), p. 477 (supportive of Lilie's argument); Lilie (2009); Simpson (2013), pp. 215–224; Treadgold (2013), pp. 437–438; Neville (2018), p. 187, with references to older studies of this aspect.



### 2.1.5 Ioannes Zonaras and Michael Glykas

The world chronicles of Ioannes Zonaras and Michael Glykas are much briefer on the Komnenian period and devote less attention to Latins than the previous works discussed. However, their brief references might be more representative of the perception and knowledge of Latins in the broader strata of Byzantine society. Many inhabitants of the empire had a limited experience of them, at least outside the capital and places where they resided or that they frequented.<sup>208</sup>

Not much is known about the life of Ioannes Zonaras (ca. 1074–after ca. 1145). Having served under Alexios I as judge and *πρωτασηκρήτης*, he retired to a monastery on the island of Hagia Glykeria after Alexios's death (1118), possibly having fallen out of favor.<sup>209</sup> During the period of his retirement from worldly affairs, Zonaras composed a chronicle (*ἐπιτομή ιστοριῶν*) up to the accession of Ioannes II Komnenos (1118–43).<sup>210</sup> The time of its composition is uncertain, but according to Treadgold, it was begun ca. 1135 and was finished in the first years of the reign of Manouel I, ca. 1145.<sup>211</sup> This historical work is remarkable in several ways. Firstly, it demonstrates attention to the distant past of the Roman (Byzantine) Empire, even the Republican period, which is often neglected by other medieval Greek historians.<sup>212</sup> This attests to a strong identification with ancient Roman history and an awareness of continuity and tradition—important markers of Byzantine identities in the twelfth century.<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, its preservation in seventy-two codices, as well as in an early Slavic translation, seems to suggest a strong interest in this work already in the Middle Ages.<sup>214</sup> Finally, the *ἐπιτομή ιστοριῶν* is one of the longest historiographical works of Romania and its author did laborious research.<sup>215</sup> As it is a world chronicle, the treatment of Alexios I's time is rather brief, even though Zonaras was an

208 See Chs. 2–8 for a broader discussion on the integration of Westerners in Romania.

209 On Zonaras and his works in general, see Hunger (1978), pp. 416–418; Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 382, pp. 430–431; Grigoriadis (1998a); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 465–534; Treadgold (2013), pp. 388–399; Neville (2018), ch. 27.

210 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Dindorf (1868–1875); ed. Büttner-Wobst (1897); trans. Trapp (1986).

211 Treadgold (2013), p. 392.

212 Irmscher (1996b), p. 524, cites the verse chronicle of Manasses, who knew Zonaras's work, as an example for the neglect of the history of Republican Rome, which seems an interlude between the rule of the Roman kings and the reestablishment of rightful order by Caesar and Augustus.

213 See above.

214 Irmscher (1996b), p. 524.

215 Treadgold (2013), pp. 392–399.

eyewitness to the reign.<sup>216</sup> By contrast with the *Alexiad*, the emperor's domestic policies, notably his preference for and reliance on the military aristocracy, are criticized, and attention devoted to non-Byzantines is largely generic.<sup>217</sup>

Besides his history, Zonaras is famous for his theological works, particularly a commentary on canon law, which equally attracted the attention of contemporaries, and in which Latins are mentioned not infrequently.<sup>218</sup> The histories of this period in general, however, are not strongly concerned with religious differences.<sup>219</sup> Nevertheless, one should not forget that the religious dimension was important to the historians in their assessment of Latins, even if they did not discuss this dimension broadly in their historiographical works. At any rate, it seems that theological discussion of Westerners had more to do with Byzantine developments than attitudes towards members of the Western Church.<sup>220</sup>

The life of Michael Glykas (ca. 1130?–ca. 1200?), who is probably identical with Michael Sikidites<sup>221</sup> and who composed a controversial treatise on the Eucharist,<sup>222</sup> is equally obscure. Like Choniates and other contemporaries, his origins were provincial; he moved from his native Kerkyra to the capital at a relatively young age. Thanks to his education, he became an imperial secretary. He may have been charged with treason in 1159 and put in prison, though this is uncertain because his poems imploring Emperor Manouel's mercy might be

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216 Based on the editions of Dindorf and Büttner-Wobst, the section that deals with the reign of Alexios I (ed. Büttner-Wobst, pp. 726–768) covers a tiny fraction (ca. 2.5 percent) of the entire history and a very modest part (ca. 5 percent) of the Byzantine period, counting from the time of Konstantinos I.

217 For this generic tendency of Byzantine literature, see above, pp. 33–35.

218 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Canonical Commentary*, ed. Rhalles and Potles (1852–1859); *Hagiographical and Homiletical Works*, ed. Kaltsogianne (2013). See also Beck (1959), pp. 656–657.

219 See Afinogenov (1992), p. 20: “[...] Zonaras saw his historical writing as an entirely secular work, totally unrelated to his state as monk.” Bayer (2002), p. 115, similarly speaks of a relatively profane orientation of middle Byzantine historiography with regards to church history.

220 See below. Zonaras also composed liturgical poetry, on which see Afinogenov (1992), p. 15. After 1204, however, Choniates's *Πανοπλία δογματική* can also be seen in part as an attempt to lay the framework within which a dogmatic understanding with Latins could be reached, not out of genuine interest for them, but to the benefit of the Byzantines. See Simpson (2013), p. 39.

221 On this point, see Kresten (1978), pp. 90–92; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 380–381; Treadgold (2013), p. 405.

222 Krumbacher (1895), pp. 444–445.

fictional.<sup>223</sup> If he was blinded, it was most likely a partial blinding,<sup>224</sup> perhaps as punishment for his alleged involvement in the conspiracy of the guardian of the imperial inkstand, Theodoros Styppeiotes. If imprisoned, Glykas was released a few years later. He seems to have become a monk, writing a world chronicle, whose composition is dated on conjecture by Treadgold to ca. 1170.<sup>225</sup> Various texts of theological content were also composed by Glykas, as well as an anthology of popular proverbs.<sup>226</sup> Some of his writings have been dated by Krumbacher to the 1170s and 1180s, which seems convincing.<sup>227</sup>

Glykas's world chronicle is shorter than Zonaras's and more moralizing in tone.<sup>228</sup> Apparently, its purpose was to provide an overview of world history for those readers who found Zonaras too extensive. It includes moral assessments of the biblical and historical events and people it describes. The background to this peculiarity appears to be that Glykas composed this work not just for a general audience but for a pupil, who may or may not have been his biological "child" and is addressed throughout. The focus on this "child" explains the disproportional, unusually large amount of space that Glykas devotes to the history of creation, deemed to be of particular educational significance.<sup>229</sup> The section on Alexios I's reign follows Zonaras, but is shorter, and does not seem to contain additions by Glykas himself with regards to content.<sup>230</sup>

223 MICHAEL GLYKAS, *Prison Poem*, ed. Tsolakes (1959); Krumbacher (1895), pp. 405–406; Beck (1971), pp. 108–109; Bourbouhakis (2007); Lauxtermann (2014), pp. 158–159; Neville (2018), ch. 29. The second poem, described by Krumbacher (1895), p. 412, praises the emperor's bloodless victory over the Hungarians (ca. 1165), but doesn't add anything to the information on the wars against Hungary provided by other sources. The work in which he argues against the astrological views of the emperor, edited by Eustratiades (1906), vol. 1, pp. 476–500, can be dated to the 1170s and was therefore not the main cause of his imprisonment (if he was in fact imprisoned). See Kresten (1978), pp. 72, 93–95.

224 Krumbacher (1895), p. 416.

225 Treadgold (2013), p. 406, in accordance with Krumbacher (1895), p. 420, tentatively dates the work to the 1160s. Magdalino (1993b), pp. 381–382, draws attention to the difficulties of dating the chronicle, but thinks it more likely that it was written after his theological works (see following note).

226 MICHAEL GLYKAS, *Theological Texts*, ed. Eustratiades (1906–1912); Beck (1959), pp. 654–655; Kiapidou (2011, 2013). On the anthology, its prologue, and epilogue, see Krumbacher (1895), pp. 402–405, 417; Beck (1971), pp. 206–207.

227 Krumbacher (1895), pp. 441–442; Kresten (1978), p. 93.

228 Treadgold (2013), p. 481.

229 Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 424; Karpozilos (2009), p. 588. Words such as υἱός (son) or τέκνον (child) can denote a pupil rather than a biological son in Byzantine literature, see Kazhdan and Franklin (1984), p. 17; Karpozilos (2009), p. (587); Grünbart (2014b), pp. 21–22.

230 Karpozilos (2009), pp. 598–599.

### 2.1.6 Shorter Literary Works Devoted to a Historical Event: Manasses and Mesarites

During the period of the Komnenoi and Angeloi, two literary works were produced that were dedicated to an event involving Westerners: a journey to the Holy Land and a revolt in the capital. The first work was Konstantinos Manasses's so-called *᾽Οδοιπορικόν*, a lyrical account of the author's participation in an embassy to the crusader polities to win a Latin bride for Manouel I after the death of his first wife, Eirene-Bertha of the Holy Roman Empire, in early 1160. The second work, Nikolaos Mesarites's literary description of Ioannes Komnenos's palace revolt, was composed at the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>231</sup> Neither narrative is usually included in surveys of twelfth-century historiography, but they could be seen as a form of historiography or literary reflection on contemporary events, similar to Eustathios's history but more limited in scope—Eustathios's work includes an account of the preceding five years of the empire's history.

Both authors include assessments of non-Byzantines, Latins among them, whereas Mesarites, though not radically deviating from characteristic representations, interestingly seems to go beyond the standard *topoi* in a few instances, which may reflect his personal experience, as will be shown in the corresponding sections. Manasses's characterization of "others," e.g. of a Cypriot provincial, remains rather superficial and limited to *topoi*. As assessed by Nilsson, the motivations and interests reflected in the *᾽Οδοιπορικόν* have more to do with the literary society of Komnenian Constantinople, the imperial court and the emperor himself, which the many flattering descriptions of the poet's admiration of and longing for the capital indicate.<sup>232</sup>

### 2.1.7 Histories Devoted to the Period before 1081

A remarkable number of civil servants and literati of the long twelfth century only dealt with the decades before 1081. This includes Michael Psellos (1018–ca. 1076), Michael Attaleiates (ca. 1020–84/85), Ioannes Skylitzes (ca. 1040–ca. 1105) and Georgios Kedrenos (ca. 1050?–ca. 1115?).<sup>233</sup> In addition,

231 KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *᾽Οδοιπορικόν*, ed. and trans. Aerts (2003); NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, ed. Heisenberg (1907); *Palace Revolt*, trans. (1958); *Works*, trans. Angold (2017), pp. 31–74. On the *᾽Οδοιπορικόν*, see also Hunger (1978), vol. 2, p. 161; Külzer (2003); Malamut (2010); Gori (2011), who curiously omits Aerts, however; Nilsson (2012).

232 KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *᾽Οδοιπορικόν*, pp. 212 (89)–214 (130); Nilsson (2012).

233 GEORGIOS KEDRENOS, *Hist.*, ed. Bekker (1838–39). See Karpozilos (2009), pp. 331–335; Treadgold (2013), pp. 339–342; Neville (2018), ch. 23. MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Hist.*, ed. Reinsch (2014); ed. and trans. Reinsch (2015). See also Karpozilos (2009), pp. 59–185; Treadgold (2013), pp. 271–308; Neville (2018), ch. 19. MICHAEL ATTALEIATES, *Hist.*, ed.

Anna Komnene's husband, the *καίσαρ* Nikephoros Bryennios (ca. 1082–1138), who was a representative of both the imperial family and the military aristocracy, began writing a history of the deeds of Emperor Alexios I, probably at the request of the latter's widow, Eirene Doukaina (ca. 1066–1138),<sup>234</sup> toward the end of his life. Anna made it her task to continue the unfinished work after her husband died on the return from a military campaign in Cilicia and Syria.<sup>235</sup> Manasses composed a verse chronicle after Bryennios, for the *σεβαστοκρατόρισα* Eirene (ca. 1110/12–shortly after 1151/52),<sup>236</sup> widow of the second-eldest son of Ioannes II, Andronikos Komnenos (ca. 1108/09–42).<sup>237</sup> The purpose of this work was to instruct its audience about Byzantine–Roman history in both a brief and entertaining fashion. The popularity of this chronicle is reflected in the comparatively large number of manuscripts.<sup>238</sup> Finally, only a small part of an unfinished world chronicle in verse by Ioannes Tzetzes (ca. 1110–after 1180) has survived.<sup>239</sup> These accounts cease with the years 1057 (Kedrenos), 1074 (Psellos), 1079 (Skylitzes and Attaleiates), 1080 (Bryennios) and 1081 (Manasses).

All these authors generally uphold the generic and introspective trend of middle Byzantine literature. Regarding the assessment of the West and Westerners, Attaleiates in particular has interesting remarks to make, which can be said to go at least somewhat against the trend.<sup>240</sup>

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and trans. Pérez Martín (2002); ed. Tsolakes (2011); trans. Kaldellis and Krallis (2012). See Karpozilos (2009), pp. 187–238; Treadgold (2013), pp. 312–329; Neville (2018), ch. 21. IOANNES SKYLITZES, *Hist.* (cont.), ed. Tsolakes (1968); Karpozilos (2009), pp. 239–330; Treadgold (2013), pp. 329–339; Neville (2018), ch. 22. NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.*, ed. and trans. Gautier (1975). See Karpozilos (2009), pp. 357–374; Neville (2012); (2018), ch. 24; Treadgold (2013), pp. 344–354.

KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Hist.*, ed. Lampsidis (1996). See Karpozilos (2009), pp. 535–557; Treadgold (2013), pp. 399–403; Neville (2018), ch. 28.

234 See Barzos (1984), vol. 1, p. 98; Treadgold (2013), pp. 344, 346–347, for the dating of Eirene's and Nikephoros's birth and death.

235 See Gautier's introduction to his edition and translation of Bryennios's work, Karpozilos (2009), pp. 357–374; Treadgold (2013), pp. 344–354.

236 There are different assessments of the date of composition; see Barzos (1984), vol. 1, pp. 362, 378; Lampsidis (1988); Rhoby (2010b), p. 168; Treadgold (2013), p. 399.

237 Barzos (1984), vol. 1, pp. 357–379.

238 Hunger (1978), p. 419; Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 385, pp. 433–434; Karpozilos (2009), pp. 535–557; Nilsson and Nyström (2009); Treadgold (2013), pp. 399–403.

239 IOANNES TZETZES, *Verse Chronicle*, ed. Hunger (1955).

240 For the generic tendency of middle Byzantine literature, see above, pp. 33–35. According to Magdalino (1996), pp. 29–34, Attaleiates demonstrates open-mindedness in his history (ca. 1080) for Normans and other non-Byzantines and accords Latins *isopoliteia* (equal citizenship) and adherence to the correct faith. That he represented the Normans in such a positive light, along the lines of Konstantinos VII (905–59) who accords a special status

## 2.2 *Additional Sources*

Historians who deal with Romania in the long twelfth century are confronted with enormous losses of source material, especially of administrative and governmental documents: charters, administrative records, written instructions, official imperial and patriarchal correspondence. Nevertheless, extant sources are considerable within other fields, especially religion and theology.<sup>241</sup>

### 2.2.1 Oratory, Poetry, Letters, Novels

A fruitful and—with regards to their historical relevance—often underestimated<sup>242</sup> source for the Komnenian period is oratory, such as progymnasmata and other types of speeches written for practicing rhetorical skills to prepare (future) literati for composing epitaphs and monodies,<sup>243</sup> ekphrasis, encomia, and various other types of literary works. Encomia were often addressed to emperors or members of upper social segments, such as patriarchs, members of the imperial family, or aristocrats. A central purpose of imperial panegyric was to glorify the reigning monarch, but, as has often been observed,<sup>244</sup> there was room for the creativity of the rhetor or literatus. Latins and other non-Byzantines were dealt with in a generic manner for the most part.<sup>245</sup> They could be disparaged as inferior opponents of the imperial government defeated, or soon to be defeated, by the superior might of the ruler. If they were in alliance with the empire and acted according to the regime's wishes, they would still be deemed inferior and might even be derided, but were likely to be complimented for the fortune of the favor of the *basileus* or for a marriage

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of proximity to Franks, may have something to do with his personal outlook, but also has to do with the fact that he finished his history shortly before the Norman incursions into the Balkans and about 15 years before the First Crusade. Komnenian authors, writing after Robert Guiscard's invasions as well as other wars and conflicts with Westerners, paint a more ambivalent picture of the Normans but portray other Latins in similar terms in various instances.

241 For a survey of sources from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth century, see Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), esp. pp. 409, 428–434, 444–463, 479–484, 489–490. Hunger (1978) offers a comprehensive survey of the profane literature of the period, which he divides into (justifiably loose) genres. For the charters of patriarchs and emperors, see Grumel and Darrouzès (1989); Dölger and Wirth (1995). For other theological and religious writings, see below.

242 Stone (2001).

243 See esp. Sideras (1994).

244 See e.g., Stone (2011), esp. pp. 187–188.

245 See above, pp. 33–35.

alliance with the imperial family.<sup>246</sup> The orations often refer to historical events and individuals, many non-Byzantines among them, but often do so in an allusive manner for an audience that likely enjoyed deciphering allusions and was already familiar with the matter, or could learn about the events referred to by other means. The orators could include messages of their own, sometimes asking for financial support based on rhetorical skills, often shrouded in topoi of modesty. Furthermore, rhetors could argue implicitly for a different course of imperial policy, as Choniates, for instance, seems to have done in his Epiphany oration of 1190 regarding the German crusade. Orations could imply criticism or mockery and their encomiastic claims, to the degree that they contrasted with reality, could imply notions of imperial failure, depending on the wideness of the gap between such claims and the reality perceived by contemporaries.<sup>247</sup>

Poetry flourished likewise under the Komnenoi.<sup>248</sup> An interesting case is a poem entitled “the Muses.” It has an admonitory character,<sup>249</sup> bearing the subtitle “The final admonitions and instructions of Alexios Komnenos, mother-lover, autokrator, to Ioannes Porophyrogenetos, victor, autokrator, father-lover, his son.”<sup>250</sup> Like the *Alexiad*, this work affirms Byzantine superiority over the barbarians and often refers to the empire as being encircled by them, reflecting a sense of threat with regards to certain Western powers also apparent in a number of other twelfth-century sources, although it is conceivable as an integral part of Komnenian propaganda that emphasized the need for Byzantine unity under imperial leadership. Therefore, it is not necessarily an indication of hostile attitudes toward Westerners in particular, as opposed to other non-Byzantines, or against all Westerners in general.<sup>251</sup> In “the Muses,” Ioannes is advised to make use of the empire’s wealth when dealing with barbarians. In accordance with Byzantine-Roman imperial ideology, the successor to the throne would one day rule the barbarian peoples.<sup>252</sup> According to Mullett, the poem might have been written by Ioannes II or under his patronage. In any

246 See e.g., Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 114 (Manganeios Prodromos with regards to Henry of Austria, who married Theodora Komnene, a niece of Manouel I).

247 On Choniates’s stance in his Epiphany oration, see Angelov (2006). See also the first section of Ch. 12 and section 7 of Ch. 15 on the portrayal of Frederick Barbarossa.

248 Hunger (1978), vol. 2, ch. 7; Lauxtermann (2004), pp. 327–335.

249 A paraenesis; see Hunger (1978), vol. 2, p. 160.

250 ALEXIAN KOMNENIAN MUSES, ed. Maas (1913). A new edition and translation are planned as part of a volume on Alexios I Komnenos, on which see Mullett (2012), p. 197, n. 9.

251 For the fickleness, complexity, and ambivalence of Byzantine-Western relations during the long twelfth century, see Introduction, pp. 3–5.

252 Shepard (1996), pp. 70–76.

case, it cannot be attributed with any certainty to Alexios himself or one of his favorites, Nikolaos Kallikles.<sup>253</sup>

Overall, considerably less oratory and poetry seems to have been produced during the reign of Alexios I. Theophylaktos of Achrída, however, wrote a panegyric for Alexios I, in which he referred to the emperor's victory over Norman "barbarians" (1085).<sup>254</sup> For the eleventh to twelfth centuries, the poems in the Marciana Codex 524 complement historiography by shedding additional light on otherwise marginal figures.<sup>255</sup>

Of interest with regards to the image of Latins for the period of the reign of Ioannes II and the early reign of Manouel I are the works of Michael Rhetor, Michael Italikos (ca. 1090–before 1157),<sup>256</sup> Nikephoros Basilakes (ca. 1115–after 1182),<sup>257</sup> and Georgios Tornikes (d. before 1167), who criticizes the advancement of incompetent "barbaric" parvenus in the Byzantine administration.<sup>258</sup> Of particular significance is the poetry of Theodoros Prodromos and of the anonymous author referred to as "Manganeios Prodromos." Theodoros (ca. 1100–56/58) was a famous rhetor and poet of the Komnenian period. His historical poems for emperors and aristocrats, edited by Wolfram Hörandner, illuminate the image of non-Byzantines and "barbarians" within the context of imperial propaganda.<sup>259</sup> Manganeios Prodromos's poems from the first half of Manouel I's reign (1140s–50s) engage in unflattering topoi targeting non-Byzantines, but are more or less consistent with propagandistic aims and, like the histories, require a careful interpretation. When it suits the purpose of the rhetor and his intended audience, positive attributes are applied to the same individuals and groups.<sup>260</sup>

Later orations include those of the patriarch Michael (1170–78), when he was consul of philosophers in the 1160s and celebrated the emperor's successes

253 See Mullett (2012), pp. 206–209, 220: "But the contemporary use of this poem was not to give advice to the heir, but to position John in relation to father, πατέρα and the empire, and it was addressed to the immediate public of the Komnenos family."

254 THEOPHYLAKTOS OF ACHRIDA, Works, ed. and trans. Gautier (1980), no. 5, pp. 213–243.

255 MARC. COD. 524, ed. Lampros (1911). See also Odorico and Messis (2003); Rhozy (2010a).

256 MICHAEL ITALIKOS, Works, ed. Gautier (1972).

257 NIKEPHOROS BASILAKES, Encomia, ed. Maisano (1977); Works, ed. and trans. Garzya (1984). See also Hunger (1978), vol. 1, pp. 124–125.

258 In a letter to Ioannes Kamateros of ca. 1154; see GEORGIOS TORNIKES, Works, ed. and trans. Darrouzès (1970), no. 10, p. 129.

259 Ed. Hörandner (1974). For Prodromos's extensive oeuvre, see Hörandner's introduction to the edition: pp. 37–72.

260 Edition and translation by Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys forthcoming. An overview of currently available editions is given by Magdalino (1993b), pp. 494–500; Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001). See also the editions cited in the bibliography.



against Hungary,<sup>261</sup> Basileios of Achrida (d. ca. 1174), who delivered a funerary oration for Empress Eirene-Bertha (d. 1160),<sup>262</sup> and Euthymios Malakes (d. ca. 1202/4, orations of 1159 and 1161).<sup>263</sup> For the last years of the reign of Manouel I and the time of his Komnenian successors, oratorical material is equally rich and supplements scholars' knowledge of these reigns, as demonstrated by, for example, the orations of Eustathios, Konstantinos Manasses, Michael Choniates or various anonymi.<sup>264</sup>

The oratorical production continued, or even intensified, under the Angeloi, and on a smaller scale at the exile courts after 1204.<sup>265</sup> These orations refer to the war with the Sicilians, the conflict with Barbarossa during the passage of the Third Crusade (1189/90), and shed light on the situation before the conquest of the capital in 1204. Several orations of Niketas Choniates and a late oration of Eustathios are supplemented by the rhetorical works of less well-known literati such as Niketas's brother Michael Choniates,<sup>266</sup> Georgios Tornikes (the Younger),<sup>267</sup> Nikephoros Chrysoberges,<sup>268</sup> Sergios Kolybas,<sup>269</sup>

261 MICHAEL OF ANCHIALOS, *Inaugural Lecture*, ed. Browning (1961); Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 417, p. 449.

262 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, ed. and trans. Gentile Messina (2008).

263 Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 126; Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 415, p. 448. On Euthymios's other works, notably a funerary oration on Eustathios of Thessalonike, see Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 136.

264 MICHAEL CHONIATES, *Works*, vol. 1, ed. Lampros (1879), esp. pp. 157–180 (address to Demetrios Drimys); KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, ed. Kurtz (1905), pp. 88–98. On the anonymous works, see Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 425, p. 45; ENCOMIUM TO MANOUEL I, ed. Lappa-Zizicas (1987). On other encomia composed by Michael Choniates, see Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 129; for Manasses see Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 385, pp. 433–434.

265 Hunger (1978), vol. 1, p. 129.

266 MICHAEL CHONIATES, *Works*, e.g. vol. 1, pp. 208–258 (encomium to Isaakios II), 283–306 (monody of Eustathios of Thessalonike, ca. 1195; Choniates stresses not only Eustathios's learnedness, but also his extraordinary didactic abilities), 345–366 (monody for his brother Niketas, ca. 1217). His reminder (ὑπομνηστικόν) to Alexios III about the arbitrariness of the Byzantine administration should also be mentioned. It was edited by Stadtmüller (1934), pp. 283–286.

267 Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 422, pp. 450–451.

268 Chrysoberges notably wrote an oration that was delivered in January 1204, giving insight into the critical situation shortly before the Latin conquest, see Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 475, pp. 479–480; NIKEPHOROS CHRYSOBERGES, *Encomia*, ed. Treu (1892), no. 3, pp. 24–35; *Encomium to Alexios IV (1204)*, trans. Brand (1968). See also NIKEPHOROS CHRYSOBERGES, *Address to Patriarch Ioannes X (1202)*, ed. Browning (1978).

269 SERGIOS KOLYBAS, *Encomia of 1193*, ed. Regel (1917).

Ioannes Syropoulos,<sup>270</sup> Euthymios Tornikes,<sup>271</sup> and Gregorios Antiochos.<sup>272</sup> A funerary oration by Nikolaos Mesarites for his brother Ioannes (1207) offers an additional description of the Latin conquest by an eyewitness, as well as an account of the aftermath of the occupation. Ioannes had been involved in religious discussions with Latins and was responsible for drafting a letter to Pope Innocent III, which is written in a derisive tone and reflects an unwillingness to make concessions.<sup>273</sup> Both the summary of the discussions and the letter are preserved by Nikolaos in his epitaph.<sup>274</sup> Even if the Latins played a role in the life of the brothers, they appear first and foremost as a threat to a sense of identity and culture, which had to be preserved and defended after the conquest.<sup>275</sup> This is congruent with the general introspective tendency of middle Byzantine literature.<sup>276</sup>

For the period after Manouel's death until after the Fourth Crusade, the letters of Michael Choniates (ca. 1138–1222) make quite a few references to Latins, whose military operations and conquests heavily impacted Michael's life from 1203, as well as that of his friends and relatives. In spite of his personal experience, his literary writings cannot be said to go beyond the generic and introspective trend of literary portrayals of non-Byzantines. Choniates seems to be more interested in his and his people's suffering than the Latins who inflicted it.<sup>277</sup> Apart from occasional references in passing, the West and Westerners usually do not feature strongly in epistolography, even after the conquest of 1204.<sup>278</sup>

270 IOANNES SYROPOULOS, *Encomium*, ed. Bachmann (1935); Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 420, p. 450.

271 EUTHYMIOS TORNIKES, *Discours*, ed. Darrouzès (1968); Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 476, p. 480.

272 GREGORIOS ANTIOCHOS, *Letters*, ed. and trans. Darrouzès (1962); ed. and trans. Darrouzès (1963); GREGORIOS ANTIOCHOS, *Encomium*, ed. and trans. Bachmann and Dölger (1940); Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 414, pp. 447–448.

273 See NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Epitaphios*, ed. Heisenberg (1923), with Heisenberg's introduction (pp. 3–16), and Angold's translation and commentary: NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Works*, trans. Angold, pp. 134–192.

274 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Epitaphios*, pp. 52–63 (religious debates), 63–66 (letter to Innocent III); Flusin (2003).

275 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Dossier on the Patriarchate*, ed. Heisenberg (1923); *Lenten Sermon of 1215*, ed. Heisenberg (1923); Flusin (2003), esp. p. 83. For an interpretation of Byzantine representations of Latins after 1204, see Ch. 14.

276 See above, pp. 33–35.

277 MICHAEL CHONIATES, *Letters*, ed. Kolovou (2001); Kolovou (1999); Gallina (2006).

278 Some of the notable letter writers in the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries (other than the aforementioned historiographers) were Michael Italikos, Prodromos,

rather letters are more reflective of the circles in which literati moved and of their preoccupations.<sup>279</sup>

The revival of late antique novels in the twelfth century is of interest for an investigation of Byzantine attitudes toward the “other.”<sup>280</sup> Though they do not refer to contemporary society directly, they do reveal something about the identities of the upper social strata and their concepts of “others.”<sup>281</sup> In the novels, the “other” and the unfamiliar outside world are mostly represented in a negative manner.<sup>282</sup> They may therefore reflect Byzantine attitudes of superiority and a certain cultural self-sufficiency. Importantly, however, the world of the novels was not the world of their Byzantine authors and audience, and the portrayal of the “others” of the fictitious world of the novels, composed for literary and entertainment purposes, should not be regarded as reflective of attitudes toward non-Byzantines or “xenophobia” in particular.<sup>283</sup>

### 2.2.2 Theological and Religious Writings

The bulk of extant Byzantine literature from the period of the Komnenoi and Angeloi consists of theological works and religious polemics.<sup>284</sup> They are used selectively here to contextualize what historiography has to say on Westerners.

Even a superficial survey of religious treatises of the period reveals an aspect well in line with the outlook observed in historiography and other sources. The attitudes that are reflected in these treatises are by no means uniform. They contain irenic positions as well as extremely polemical stances. Members of

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Euthymios Malakes, Nikephoros Basilakes, Ioannes Tzetzes, Theodoros Balsamon, Manasses, Georgios and Demetrios Tornikes, and Ioannes Apokaukos. For further references and characteristics of the letters, see Grünbart (2004), pp. 349–350, 360–374.

279 See above.

280 For the twelfth-century novels in general, see Cupane (2004), pp. 414–429. For the influential *Digenes Akrites*, a work that could be defined as somewhere between a novel and an epic, see *ibid.*, pp. 429–431.

281 See above; also Jouanno (1992), p. 292. Magdalino (1993b), p. 139, holds the view that it is no coincidence that piracy is a major theme of the mid-twelfth-century novels and that they reflect a historical reality.

282 Jouanno (1992), pp. 289, 300; Beaton (2000). On the image of the “other” (pirates, etc.) in the novels, see also Odorico (1993, 2003).

283 Nilsson (2014).

284 For Byzantine sources on the religious relations with Latins from the tenth to the early twelfth centuries, see Bayer (2002), for eleventh–twelfth century relations, see Patlagean's contributions to Vauchez and Engels (1994); Avvakumov (2002). For relations in the Holy Land and corresponding sources, see Hamilton (1980), Pahlitzsch (2001). For “anti-Latin” religious polemic: Beck (1959), pp. 609–629; Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), pp. 138–140.

Latin religious communities could be portrayed as fellow Christian brothers whose schismatic tendencies or differences on certain aspects of religious practice and doctrine were not deemed important, with perhaps a few exceptions. In some sources, however, they are represented as heretics, albeit not necessarily of the worst kind.<sup>285</sup> Overall, there are many indications in the sources that most Latins and Byzantines continued to perceive and treat each other as fellow Christians during the long twelfth century and while the events of 1054 or the crusades highlighted differences, their detrimental impact was limited.<sup>286</sup>

The works of Theophylaktos of Achrida, especially his treatise on Latin religious beliefs and practices, composed in ca. 1090 or ca. 1112,<sup>287</sup> are representative of an irenic position,<sup>288</sup> like, for instance, those of Petros of Antioch in the mid-eleventh century<sup>289</sup> and his successor Ioannes V Oxeites, who was in office at the time of the city's conquest by the crusaders in 1098. Interestingly, Ioannes argued for moderation in criticizing Westerners even after his forced retreat from Antioch, where a Latin patriarch had been installed in 1100.<sup>290</sup> A more polemic outlook is represented by Michael Keroularios, Petros's contemporary, and by the canonist Balsamon in the late twelfth century. To those sources, the well-known lists of Latin religious errors can be added. They also record differences in religious practice that are of a more cultural nature.<sup>291</sup> A famous representative of the lists is a work written by Konstantinos Stilbes after the conquest of 1204, reflecting a fresh experience of the Latin takeover.<sup>292</sup> Even in the most polemic and the irenic texts, however, nuances need to be taken into account. Balsamon, while portraying Latins as heretics, does recognize as a canonist certain papal privileges on legal grounds. Balsamon's canonical commentary, paralleled with the commentaries of Zonaras and others, would merit a separate investigation with regards to their stance on Latins.<sup>293</sup> Polemic works can also be regarded as mainly motivated by "internal" factors,

285 Avvakumov (2002), esp. pp. 245–246.

286 Siecienski (2017), p. 240; Cheynet (2019), p. 86, n. 4; Kaldellis (2019b); Neocleous (2019). See also Kolbaba (2003, 2005, 2006, 2011).

287 According to Gautier, pp. 105–114, in his introduction to the first volume of his edition of Theophylaktos's works.

288 THEOPHYLAKTOS OF ACHRIDA, Works, ed. and trans. Gautier (1980), no. 6, pp. 244–285.

289 Bayer (2002), pp. 107–109.

290 IOANNES OF ANTIOCH, Works, ed. Gautier (1964), p. 142; Bayer (2002), p. 169.

291 Kolbaba (2000). Sources of the mid-eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries are listed on pp. 175–178.

292 KONSTANTINOS STILBES, On Latin Errors, ed. Darrouzès (1961); Isnenghi (2008a).

293 On Balsamon and on twelfth-century Byzantine canonical literature more generally, see Oikonomides (1991).

e.g., the definition, defense, and consolidation of religious doctrine and practices of the Byzantine Church, whose authority in the twelfth century was rather precarious. Moreover, it is unsurprising that more lists of errors were produced in times of political instability. In that sense, works such as the lists are more about Byzantines than Latins.<sup>294</sup> Another example of ambivalence are the writings of Neophytos the Recluse (1134–1214), a Cypriote saint who witnessed major historical events such as the revolt of Isaakios Komnenos against the imperial government (1184), the loss of Jerusalem (1187), the Latin conquest of Cyprus (1191), and the fall of Constantinople (1204). While Neophytos did criticize Latin religious errors and resisted their rule on the island, he bitterly mourned the loss of Jerusalem, siding with fellow Christians against the Muslim conquerors. This suggests that a common Christian faith was important to Neophytos, or at least a factor in his assessments, despite religious differences. Notably, historiographical sources suggest that this appears to have been the case for Byzantines more generally.<sup>295</sup> Moreover, religious attitudes were not necessarily congruent with other attitudes, as, for example, the evaluation of emperors in Byzantine literature indicates.<sup>296</sup>

Due to developments of the later eleventh century, such as the crusades, the expansion of the Normans and the Italian maritime republics, along with the shift of Romania's key zone to the Balkans, exposure to Western Christianity increased. This change favored religious dialogue and disputation, as did intellectual trends in both Romania and the West.<sup>297</sup> Religious debate between Latins and Byzantines contributed to the production of a number of works, some amount to extensive treatises. Thirty years before the *Πανοπλία δογματική* of Niketas Choniates based on the earlier work of Euthymios Zigabenos, the learned imperial official Andronikos Kamateros (ca. 1110–80), a relative of the emperor Manouel I, wrote the “Sacred Arsenal” (*Ἱερὰ Ὀπλοθήκη*), a lengthy work.<sup>298</sup> It was probably commissioned by Manouel and composed in ca. 1172–74. The (shorter) first part of the work is dedicated to Latin Christians and claims to quote verbatim a dialogue

294 Angold (2000), pp. 402–403, 457–467; Kolbaba (2000); (2001), esp. pp. 118–119.

295 NEOPHYTOS THE RECLUSE, Works, ed. Zacharopoulos, Karabidopoulos, Oikonomou, and Tsames (1996–2008). As mentioned previously, this does not exclude the likely possibility that, at least for Byzantines of whom literary sources are reflective, factors other than the common Christian religion were much more important in representing Latins. On Neophytos, see Galatariotou (1991); Demosthenous (2007); Enkleistriotes (2010); Glaros (2013).

296 On this point, see Kaldellis (2015), pp. 189–192.

297 Cameron (2016), esp. pp. 64–65.

298 The first part has been recently edited: ANDRONIKOS KAMATEROS, *Sacred Arsenal*, ed. Bucossi (2014).

between Manouel and Roman cardinals. Controversial issues mentioned in the dialogue are papal primacy and the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit (*filioque*).<sup>299</sup> During the course of the twelfth century and in congruence with the intensification of contacts with the West, Byzantines became increasingly aware of these issues and their importance. Works dealing with papal primacy are those of Niketas Seides and Basileios of Achrida,<sup>300</sup> regarding which a wide spectrum of opinions can be found, from a recognition of an honorary papal primacy in the pentarchy of the patriarchates to an assertion of Constantinopolitan honorary and perhaps even jurisdictional primacy.<sup>301</sup>

Latins play a relatively minor role in the hagiography of the period, indeed the long twelfth century has traditionally been known as a period of comparatively sparse hagiographical productivity. In recent years, scholars have come to a more nuanced view.<sup>302</sup> The period of the Komnenoi and Angeloi did produce remarkable lives of saints. Most of them recounted the βίος of holy men from the reign of Alexios I. Alexios, by associating with holy men, may have intended to enhance his prestige and to publicly atone for the bloody capture of Constantinople in 1081, which had been accompanied by atrocities and plundering.<sup>303</sup> The βίος of Kyrillos (ca. 1015–1110),<sup>304</sup> Meletios (fl. ca. 1100),<sup>305</sup> Esaias (fl. ca. 1100),<sup>306</sup> Christodoulos (ca. 1025–93),<sup>307</sup> and Bartholomaios (fl. during

299 Darrouzès (1965), pp. 73–78; Bucossi (2009); Siecienski (2017), pp. 274–275. On the *filioque* and the question of papal primacy, see indicatively Siecienski (2010, 2017).

300 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, Dialogues, ed. Schmidt (1901); NIKETAS SEIDES, *Against Papal Primacy*, ed. Gahbauer (1975). The stance of Niketas of Nikomedeia in the discussions with Anselm of Havelberg in Constantinople in 1136 are only preserved by the latter, whose description of the Byzantine position therefore has to remain doubtful. Darrouzès (1965), pp. 59–65, however, thinks it is safe to attribute a position to Niketas which was as irenic as that of Theophylaktos, if not more so. On Anselm of Havelberg's interactions with Byzantine scholars, see also Cameron (2016), pp. 82–89; Kapriev (2018) with the critical review by Riedl (2019).

301 For more Byzantine literature referring to the subject and the relatively wide spectrum of attitudes displayed, see also Darrouzès (1965); Chadwick (2003); Siecienski (2017).

302 Paschalidis (2011); Papaioannou (2014), pp. 39–40.

303 See Armstrong (1996), p. 230, on this point.

304 Composed by Nikolaos Kataskepenos in the 1140s: NIKOLAOS KATASKEPENOS, *Life of Saint Kyrillos*, ed. and trans. Sargologos (1964); Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 409, p. 445; Mullett (2004), p. 409.

305 There are two lives of Meletios, composed by Theodoros Prodromos and Nikolaos of Methone, each of whom pursued his own agenda. Like Kataskepenos, they both wrote in the 1140s. See Karayannopoulos and Weiß (1982), no. 408, pp. 444–445; Messis (2004).

306 According to Armstrong (1996), p. 225, this life is based on oral tradition and was reconstructed much later.

307 Armstrong (1996), p. 223.

the reign of Alexios I)<sup>308</sup> belong to this group. Additionally, a life of Ioannes the Faster, founder of the Petra monastery in Constantinople during the patriarchate of Nikolaos Gramatikos (1084–1111), existed but is now lost.<sup>309</sup> During the reign of Manouel I, Leontios, patriarch of Jerusalem in exile (ca. 1110/15–85), traveled to the Holy Land, which is recounted in his *bios*, probably written around the time of the conquest of 1204 by the monk Theodosios Goudeles in Constantinople and commissioned by Arsenios/Antonios, Leontios's successor as abbot of Patmos.<sup>310</sup> Several other saints are known who lived outside of or at the periphery of the empire in the twelfth century: the aforesaid Neophytos the Recluse, dwelling on Cyprus, a Byzantine province until 1184/91, and Kyprianos of Calabria. Hilarion of Moglena (d. 1164) is an obscure figure for whom there is only Slavonic evidence from the fourteenth century. A *bios* of Empress Eirene-Piroska, daughter of the Hungarian king Ladislaus I, also existed, but only a synaxar entry has survived.<sup>311</sup> In addition, there are a few even more obscure and dubious cases.<sup>312</sup>

Not surprisingly, the lives of saints do not appear to depart from the generic and introspective trend in dealing with alterity in Byzantine literature.<sup>313</sup> Even so, they offer glimpses of contemporary relations with Latins. The Life of Leontios, for instance, recounts how the saint visited Jerusalem as patriarch, how he was prevented from celebrating mass at the Holy Sepulcher, and how Latins in Jerusalem tried to murder him. This can be seen as an indication of political tension between the Greek and Latin ecclesiastics in the kingdom of Jerusalem in the last years of Manouel's reign. Characteristically, however, the image of Latins remains superficial in this work, which is concentrated on the figure of Leontios and his portrayal as a holy man. Even more strikingly representative of the said generic trend and superficiality is the portrayal of Westerners in the *bios* of Kyrillos, which includes a vision during which the Norman invader Bohemond appears to the saint as a black dog with blood-red eyes besieging Dyrrachion. Kyrillos predicts his defeat against Alexios. Similarly, Saint Christodoulos has a vision

308 Armstrong (1996), pp. 222–223.

309 Magdalino (1981), p. 52.

310 THEODOSIOS GOUDELES, *Life of Leontios*, ed. and trans. Tsougarakis (1993), and the editor's introduction. Also see Rose (1985, 1996/1997); Pahlitzsch (1999); (2001), pp. 150–181; Kaplan (2004a, 2004b); Hinterberger (2011), pp. 134–136.

311 Edition in Kotzabassi (2013), pp. 170–175; Ságghy and Ousterhout (2019), Appendix 1, pp. 327–31. See also the first section of Ch. 3.

312 Magdalino (1981), pp. 53–54.

313 On this trend, see above, pp. 33–35.

of Bohemond's father, Robert Guiscard, as a terrible animal, also besieging Dyrrachion.<sup>314</sup>

### 2.2.3 Imperial and Patriarchal Documents

Most of the abundant imperial and patriarchal documents of the long twelfth century have been lost. Some documents can be (partly) reconstructed from Greek as well as non-Greek sources, written in, among other languages, Arabic, Armenian, old French, and Latin.<sup>315</sup> Their advantage is that they offer insights into patriarchs' and emperors' official representation of Latins, and, similarly, the representation of Latins when addressing fellow Byzantines.<sup>316</sup>

### 2.2.4 Non-textual Sources

Non-textual sources such as archaeological evidence, seals, objects of material culture, objects of art, gifts sent to the West, such as relics and other precious objects, are in one way or another connected to the relations to and perceptions of Latins in the long twelfth century. Many Byzantine objects that have survived in the West, however, are anonymous, which hinders an interpretation in terms of Byzantine attitudes toward Westerners. Relics were, of course, employed as diplomatic media and the common Christian religion was a major factor in Byzantine-Western relations. Depictions of Latins in representations of emperors triumphing over enemies in battle are lost and known only through literary descriptions.<sup>317</sup> A result of the research of art historians is that hardly any Western influence can be firmly determined in Byzantine art and architecture. The same is true for the introduction of other Western, or supposedly Western, elements into Byzantine society. No major innovations originating in the West can be ascertained. Even when there is evidence, it does not seem very pervasive and is limited to the upper strata of society. Textual as well as non-textual evidence is indicative of attitudes of political and cultural superiority: non-Byzantine, often similar, elements were adopted as an extension of Byzantine culture, not as a replacement. Examples include jousting, which accorded with the military prowess valued by the imperial family and

314 Abrahamse (1986), p. 194; Ciggaar (1996), p. 286; Mullett (2004), pp. 395, 401.

315 Examples of attempts to reconstruct imperial and patriarchal documents from such sources, as well as to assess their relation with the Latin *authenticum* and the Greek original respectively, are the studies of Kresten and Gastgeber.

316 See esp. Grumel and Darrouzès (1989); Dölger and Wirth (1995). See also the important studies of Kresten and Gastgeber and, for the Byzantine successor polity of Nicaea (1204–61), Dölger and Wirth (1977).

317 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 470–477 (“the emperor in art”).



the aristocracy, the use of kite shields, or the unction of emperors. The same is true for large church bells, the diplomatic use of a hand gesture, the adoption and borrowing of Western terms such as *λίχιος* (liegeman),<sup>318</sup> the *deditio*, the service of *strator* (Hellenized as *στράτωρ*), the appearance of stained glass, a female hairstyle (the single braid on the back), shaving, or wearing trousers. The situation is quite different with respect to Byzantine influence in the West, for instance on Western art and architecture, on coins and seals.<sup>319</sup>

It has been argued that Western socio-cultural influence was deliberately hidden and obscured in Byzantium and that it was stronger in Byzantine society and thought than it may initially appear.<sup>320</sup> If one fully accepts this hypothesis, it stands to reason that the Byzantines appear to have excelled at this deception, given the aforesaid limited evidence of influence, despite considerable efforts by modern scholars to find its traces, and the fact that many socio-cultural developments of the 1100s, such as Hellenism, the novels or the rise of literary vernacular can well be explained without reference to the West. Additionally, and crucially, there is extremely limited evidence of engagement with Latin literature by Byzantine scholars of the period.<sup>321</sup>

318 The term *lizios* was adopted into the Byzantine register of titles and offices, derived from the Latin term *ligius*, a type of vassal that had emerged in the West during the eleventh century. From a Byzantine perspective, it indicated an especially close relationship between the *basileus* and a subject of high rank. Far from significantly altering the political order, it was merely an additional title that the Byzantine court and administration adopted during the Komnenian period, although it made the relationship more familiar and binding for the Latin side. See Lilie (1993b), p. 121; Zorzi (2012), p. 56; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 59, n. 132 (p. 512); Maniati-Kokkini (2019), pp. 296–297.

319 See Parani (2003), esp. pp. 230–238; Schreiner (2011a), pp. 181–182; Rodriguez Suarez (2014), esp. chs. 3 and 4 and his similar conclusion on p. 288: “The increase in contacts did not lead to a major process of cultural transfer: the Western impact on Byzantine society in general was minor”; Rodriguez Suarez (2019): on the exceptional role of Emperor Manouel’s uncle Isaakios Komnenos. See also Penna (2017), who argues that the Western practice of *ius represaliarum* was adopted under Isaakios II in his dealings with the Genoese in 1192. However, this observation pertains to the end of the long twelfth century and would not substantially change the overall picture.

320 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 386–387, 407–408; Eshel (2018), p. 152.

321 See also above, pp. 22–23, 26, 28, 30–32, 33–35, and Ch. 7, pp. 221–222. Western *political* influence is evident for the long twelfth century, by contrast, as shown throughout this book.



**PART 2**

*The Portrayal of the Western Presence within  
the Empire and of Westerners in Imperial Service*





## Ambiguous Relations with Italians

Italy was of singular political, strategic, commercial, and cultural importance in Byzantine-Western relations during the long twelfth century. The focus on Italy in the coverage of the empire's Western relations in Greek historiography reflects this importance. The commercial and maritime powers of the Italian peninsula had a significant presence in Romania, and they emerge as a distinguishable group in Byzantine literature, namely Venice, Pisa, Genoa, and Ancona. Venice, due to its standing in the empire, and Ancona, due to its role in a major event of imperial history, are more prominent and discernible, while Pisa and Genoa are referred to in vague terms, with those hailing from either denoted by the generic "Latins."<sup>1</sup> The use of the term "Italians" for the present purposes does not denote any identifiable ethnic group but serves as a collective term referring to inhabitants of the Italian peninsula, merchants and seamen of Italian origin in particular.

### 1 The Close and Fluctuating Relationship with Βενέτικοι (Venetians)

#### 1.1 *Proximity and Difference Prior to the Second Crusade*

Although the coverage of non-Byzantine residents in the empire is generally limited in Greek literature of the long twelfth century, Venetians constitute an exception. Among Italian maritime powers, they undoubtedly had the most significant presence in Romania. Economic and commercial considerations, though important, were perhaps of less significance to the Byzantine government than the naval power it lacked but which the Venetians could provide.<sup>2</sup> In addition, there were historical ties that connected Romania with the republic. Even if the Serenissima had in practice become independent from the empire in the eleventh century, the Komnenian and Angeloi emperors regarded themselves, at least in name, as the rightful overlords of the Venetians. The doge and many of Venice's upper social strata were apparently willing to accept this in return for the privileges issued to the republic between the late tenth century and 1198, as well as the Byzantine titles and gifts conferred on representatives

<sup>1</sup> For a general overview, see indicatively Lilie (1984a); Laiou (2002); Carile (2011); Penna (2012).

<sup>2</sup> Smyrlis (2016).

of the republic. Byzantine representations of Venetians were both marked by ambivalence and indicative of a special relationship distinct from that with other Latins.<sup>3</sup>

Anna Komnene's portrayal of Venetians serves the introspective agenda of the *Alexiad*.<sup>4</sup> They are first introduced there as among the allies Alexios managed to win over in his conflict with Robert Guiscard. Anna represents this episode as a desperate situation that her father's shrewd diplomacy managed to resolve. The Venetians were persuaded to assist Alexios in exchange for promises and gifts: according to Anna, he offered whatever they requested, provided it would not be to the empire's detriment, and guaranteed it by means of chrysobulls—a reference to the privilege of 1082 and the negotiations leading up to it.<sup>5</sup> It is not surprising that Alexios's daughter does not mention that Venice may have been willing to send a fleet against Robert without making any demands. Venice's vital concern was to avoid any one political power ruling on both sides of the Adriatic, a prospect that would have seriously threatened the republic's trade and freedom of shipping. Reference to this concern by Anna would have diminished her portrayal of the emperor's accomplishment in enlisting Venetian help.<sup>6</sup>

There are strong indications that trade issues were considered neither a suitable topic for literary works nor (despite actual practice) a respectable activity for the aristocracy. The *Alexiad* relates that the Venetian representatives accepted Alexios's offers, receiving guarantees for their demands and preparing a fleet against Robert, but does not specify those demands, not only because the Venetians may have made none at the time.<sup>7</sup> Alexios himself

3 See Nicol (1988), pp. 55–57, 62, 92; Laiou (1998b), pp. 173–174, and the relevant chapters in Laiou (2002). The bibliography on Venice and its relationship with Byzantium in the long twelfth century is abundant.

4 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

5 Less likely is a dating to May 1092: see Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1070, p. 87; Jacoby (2002); Madden (2002); Frankopan (2004); Penna (2012), pp. 26–34, with references to older studies. According to Frankopan, economic and monetary matters were a significant concern for Alexios around 1092, given the state of imperial finances, although this would not invalidate the argument that Venice's naval support was the most important consideration, notably in the context of the rebellions of the islands of Crete and Cyprus combined with the threat posed by the Turkish pirate Tzachas in the Aegean.

6 See Nicol (1988), p. 55, and Frankopan (2004), p. 157, who underline the significance of the Venetian concern.

7 Gerolymatou (2015); Magdalino (2015); Merianos (2015). For aristocratic identity in the long twelfth century, see Grünbart (2015), who shows that trade was not represented as aristocratic activity; see also Ch. 1, pp. 36–42. For the negative image of trade, see Laiou (1998b), pp. 177–178; Zorzi (2012), p. 249: “[Literary sources of the twelfth century], tutte di carattere retorico, descrivono i Veneziani secondo il *cliché* negativo del commerciante/

revived an old law that prevented members of trade guilds from attaining senatorial rank,<sup>8</sup> and historians barely mention trade, even though it is apparent that the financial gain from trade was of great interest, and not only to emperors.<sup>9</sup> Anna's omission of this aspect of Alexios's diplomacy with the Venetians must have been deliberate, as the Byzantine government produced abundant official records of trade regulations, imperial chrysobulls granting trade privileges, and other relevant documents that she, and other historians, would have had access to.<sup>10</sup>

Anna's account of the Venetians encountering Robert's fleet emphasizes its formidable strength and implicitly the merit of Alexios's ultimate victory, but it also pays tribute to his Venetian allies, again in order to reinforce the *basileus's* glorification: "When they saw Rompertos's fleet on the far side of the town, protected with every sort of warlike machine, they shrank back from battle." She comments that the Venetians, however, were still willing to deliver a naval battle, although they promised, apparently in order to deceive the duke, to surrender within a day to Robert's demand to swear allegiance to Pseudo-Michael VII, the pretender supported by the Normans. The subsequent narrative notes the seafaring skills of the Venetians, describing how they tied their larger ships together to construct a "harbor at sea," which enabled them in becalmed conditions to spend the night at sea and prepare for battle.<sup>11</sup> Anna relates that the Venetians provoked Bohemond, Guiscard's son, into an attack; they then destroyed his ship and won the battle. They united with Byzantine forces and continued to fight Robert on land, killing many and capturing substantial booty. The *Alexiad* then emphasizes Alexios's magnanimity and generosity, that he bestowed many favors and rewards upon his victorious allies, including considerable gifts of money for the Venetian doge (δοῦξ Βενετίας) and his "archons" (ἄρχοντες, i.e., Venetian dignitaries). This demonstration of

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mercante, il cui profitto è considerato ,turpe' (αἰσχροκέρδεια), perché intrinsecamente legato alla menzogna, sia nella visione classica (per es. Omero, Od. IV 288–90, a proposito di un Fenicio) sia in quella cristiana." See also Nicol (1988), p. 106 ("there was a materialistic streak in the Venetian character which Byzantines of the upper class affected to despise"); Magdalino (1993b), p. 147; and Zorzi (2012), pp. 248–249.

8 Magdalino (1984b), p. 68, however, notes that rich tradesmen could simply give up their guild membership if they wished to become senators.

9 Smyrlis (2016).

10 For Byzantium's developed administration, see Ch. 1, p. 35.

11 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist. IV.2.3*, p. 123(87–12); see p. 123(94–96): θεασάμενοι δὲ τὸ ναυτικὸν τοῦ Ῥομπέρτου ἐκείθεν τῆς πόλεως Δυρραχίου παντοῖω εἶδει πολεμικῶν ὀργάνων περιπεφραγμένον ἀπεδειλίασαν πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον).

imperial favor, it is implied, confirmed Alexios's superiority and overlordship.<sup>12</sup> The *Alexiad* narrates events that might have occurred in 1084 rather than in the spring of 1082 as claimed in the text, which is another indication of the subordinate importance of the events themselves to Anna's historiographical agenda.<sup>13</sup> Anna relates that the Venetians, reinforced by Byzantine ships, again won a splendid naval victory, inducing Robert to withdraw entirely from the sea for months.<sup>14</sup>

Anna's narrative highlights several elements that characterized the relationship with Venice. Prominent among them was Venetian naval power, but the *Alexiad* also refers to historical ties: Venice had officially been part of the empire for centuries, consequently making the Venetians and their doge imperial subjects or servants.<sup>15</sup> Anna alludes to this with the incidental remark that the Romans had named the "blue color" (βένετον χρώμα) team and faction in their horse races after the Venetians.<sup>16</sup>

After a major defeat against the Normans at Dyrrachion, a Venetian garrison was entrusted with the defense of the town's citadel, and they, rather than Alexios, are blamed for its eventual surrender.<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, the Venetians and Amalfitans, who, according to Anna, made up the majority of the town's population, decided the situation was hopeless and the sensible course was to surrender Dyrrachion to the Norman duke. In order, perhaps, to cast Alexios's Venetian allies in a better light, Anna assigns the blame to "one of the settlers from Melfe" (τις τῶν ἀποίκων Μέλφης; i.e., an Amalfitan), thereby contradicting two Western accounts that single out a Venetian for blame.<sup>18</sup> Anna's rather

12 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.2.4–6, p. 123(12)–124(37). On the symbolic meaning of gifts bestowed by the Byzantine emperor, see Anca (2010), pp. 92–114.

13 On the chronological confusion in the account of the Norman-Byzantine war of 1081–85, see ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 147, n. 19, and, especially, Kislinger (2009b). This is not the place to discuss the numerous chronological confusions in the *Alexiad*. It is sufficient here to address three possible causes. First, it may be suspected that Anna and/or her possible (very) old eyewitnesses did not remember the exact order of events from more than half a century earlier (i.e., around the time that she was born). Second, accessing written information may have been a laborious task. Her access to archival documents may have been restricted or limited (on which, see Hill [2000] and Treadgold [2013], pp. 360–361). In any case, the most important reason was probably that, as is also the case for other historiographers, the information—or in this instance the reconstruction of the chronological order of events—was simply not relevant to what she intended to convey in her work.

14 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.3, pp. 124(38)–126(84).

15 The privileges for Venice confirm this Byzantine stance: see Lilie (1984a), pp. 47–49.

16 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.2.2, p. 122(76)–123(86); see also Schreiner (2008), pp. 23–24.

17 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.8.4, p. 140(30–33).

18 Geoffrey Malaterra and William of Apulia: see Kislinger (2009b), p. 133 and n. 69.



scornful description of this event asserts that Amalfitans and Venetians, rather than her father, were to blame for the surrender of Dyrrachion: “they believed they had found [something] like a passage in an impasse by fulfilling Robert’s will and handing the town over to him.”<sup>19</sup>

The same concern with the emperor’s image is present in the sixth book of the *Alexiad*, which addresses naval actions involving Venetians, Normans, and Byzantines. It relates the final confrontation with Robert Guiscard (1084–85), when Alexios again relied on Venetian assistance and promised rich rewards. The combined strength of the Venetian and Byzantine fleets won two major victories.<sup>20</sup> However, “as happens very frequently in such situations,” the Venetians were too sure of a victory that was not yet secure and sent some ships to Venice to inform the city of their success. The traitor who gave the information to Robert is named by Anna: Petros Kontarinos, a member of the Contarini, a prominent Venetian family.<sup>21</sup> Guiscard launched a surprise attack, to which the Venetians reacted by again constructing a “harbor at sea.” What followed was, according to the *Alexiad*, the most hard-fought battle yet. Many Venetian ships keeled over, with “about 13,000 men” falling into the sea. The remaining ships were captured by Robert, who won a major victory.<sup>22</sup> The number of men lost should not be taken literally but simply as an impression of Norman strength.<sup>23</sup>

Anna then shows sympathy for the Venetians, who are presented as imperial allies and honorable men, which reflects positively on Alexios, whereas Robert is portrayed as a tyrant. Robert’s excessively cruel treatment of the prisoners, which is amply described by Anna, is said to have included the blinding and mutilation of many. Rather than encouraging Alexios’s allies to agree to a peace proposal, it accomplished the opposite.

They relayed to him: “Know, *doux* Rompertos, that we, even if we had to witness the slaughtering of our own women and children, would not negate our agreements with the autokrator Alexios nor would we relent to assist him and fight for him with full dedication.”<sup>24</sup>

19 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* v.1.1–2, pp. 141(2)–142(27); see p. 141(17–18): ὡσπερ ἐν ἀπόροις πόρον εὐρηκέναι ᾠήθησαν πεισθῆναι τῷ Ῥομπέρτῳ καὶ παραδοῦναι οἱ τὴν πόλιν).

20 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vi.5.4–5, pp. 176(60)–177(79).

21 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vi.5.6, p. 177(79–92); see also ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 147, n. 64 (p. 353).

22 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vi.5.6–7, pp. 177(87)–178(7).

23 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 147, n. 66 (p. 353).

24 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vi.5.8, p. 178(7–17); see p. 178(13–17): “οἱ δὲ μηνύουσι πρὸς αὐτόν· ἴσθι, δούξ Ῥομπέρτε, ὡς εἰ καὶ τὰς σφῶν ἡμῶν γυναῖκας καὶ τὰ τέκνα ἀποσφαττόμενα θεασαίμεθα,

This indirect praise of Venetian resolve omits Venice's vital interest in avoiding either the Byzantines or the Normans ruling on both sides of the Adriatic, especially at the Strait of Otranto, the shortest distance between southern Italy and the Western provinces of the empire, which again demonstrates that the presentation, albeit significant because it shows that Venetians could also be very favorably portrayed, is all about Alexios's image.

Anna continues to make major adaptations to the historical occurrences to suit her narrative. Military fortunes are reported to have changed, namely, when the Venetian allies proceeded to win another victory against Robert, nearly capturing Robert's son and wife. It is unlikely, however, that this success occurred;<sup>25</sup> rather, it may have been included in the narrative to make the rewards the emperor allotted to Venice seem more plausible.<sup>26</sup> Although it is not possible to determine whether Anna consulted the official imperial privilege or relied on a summary of its content,<sup>27</sup> it is clear that the details of her account are partially inaccurate, or perhaps reflect the later chrysobull of 1148. Her interests, at any rate, most likely lay elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

The *Alexiad* captures another major element of the relationship with Venice: Christianity. Anna specifically mentions yearly monetary gifts to all churches in Venice, and a stipulation that Amalfitans who owned workshops in Constantinople were obligated to pay fees to the church of Saint Mark. Anna also describes the location and extent of the capital's Venetian quarter, which, in addition to areas in Dyrrachion and other places in the empire, was granted to the Venetians at this time. She explicitly states that the most important concession was the permission to trade throughout the empire without having to pay customs duties or any other taxes. This reference to trade, extraordinary for Byzantine literature, stresses the provision's extraordinary character, reinforcing the idea that concessions of equal magnitude to the danger posed by Robert were in order. Alexios had to resort to confiscating church treasures, albeit prudently and respectfully according to his daughter, to pay for the continuation of the war against Guiscard. Moreover, the account makes explicit that the emperor, by means of this privilege, meant to reaffirm his superiority over Venice, not least by integrating the doge and the patriarch of Grado in the imperial hierarchy: the former received the title of πρωτοσεβαστός, the

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οὐκ ἂν τὰς πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Ἀλέξιον συνθήκας ἀπαρνησώμεθα οὔτε μὴν τοῦ ἐπαρήγειν αὐτῷ καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἐκθύμως μάχεσθαι ὄλως ἐνδύσομεν."

25 Nicol (1988), p. 59; Kislinger (2009b), pp. 142–143.

26 Kislinger (2009b), pp. 142–143.

27 Frankopan (2004), p. 138.

28 Jacoby (2001), p. 158.

latter was created ὑπέρτιμος.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, she alludes to the de facto independence of Venice by stating that the Venetians were “outside of all Roman supervision” (ἔξω πάσης ῥωμαϊκῆς ἐξουσίας), and expresses the crucial contribution they made to the empire’s defense.<sup>30</sup>

At the end of Anna’s account of the Byzantine-Norman war, there is a characteristic topical and hyperbolic comment that should not be understood literally. Guiscard died during his final military campaign against Romania (1084–85), which assured Alexios’s victory. However, he still had to return Dyrrachion to Byzantine control. The *Alexiad* recounts that the emperor, besides sowing discord among the defenders of Dyrrachion, asked Venetians in Constantinople to convince their fellow Venetians, the Amalfitans, and other settlers (ἄποικοι) in Dyrrachion to hand over the city. Anna comments, with an undertone of disapproval, on their willingness to accept gifts of money in exchange: “the whole people of Latins is thus: keen on money and used to selling even that which is dearest to them for an obol.”<sup>31</sup> Anna’s barbed comment pertains again to the business of trade that Italians in Dyrrachion exercised, and their aim of financial profit which accompanied their assistance. Such goals ran counter to aristocratic and imperial values and virtues, even though they contrasted with actual practice. Indeed, even emperors are charged with an insatiable lust for money.<sup>32</sup> It was a Greek literary tradition to apply *topoi* of the desire for riches to non-Byzantine “barbarians,” but the same attributes were associated with provincials. Most Venetians, especially those who traveled to and resided in Romania, undoubtedly had little appreciation for the culture and values held by the upper social segments of Byzantine society, and were mainly concerned with their own commercial interests.<sup>33</sup> However, generalizations about the character traits of “the whole people of Latins” should be seen as an expression

29 ANNA KOMNENE, *HIST. VI.5.9–10*, pp. 178(17)–179(40). The *Alexiad* is corroborated by *IMPERIAL PRIVILEGES FOR VENICE*, no. 2, pp. 27–45 (only preserved in its Latin version). The titles for the doge and patriarch are mentioned on p. 38, §§ 2–3. See also Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1081, pp. 93–95; Angold (1997), p. 168; Penna (2012), pp. 26–34, esp. p. 28, n. 168.

30 Lamma (1968), pp. 456–457.

31 ANNA KOMNENE, *HIST. VI.6.4*, pp. 180(78)–181(93); see p. 180(88–89): “τοιούτον γὰρ τὸ Λατίνων ἅπαν γένος ἐρασιχρήματόν τε καὶ ὀβλοῦ ἐνὸς πιπράσκειν εἰωθὸς καὶ αὐτὰ δὴ τὰ φίλτατα.”

32 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 155–157.

33 See Nicol (1988), p. 47, referring to evidence from the eleventh century. James of Venice (fl. first half of the twelfth century) is a notable exception. See Berschin (1988), pp. 217–218; Angold (1997), pp. 238–239. Berschin (1988), p. 217, comments: “Compared with the enormous influx of Greek art into Venice, what was undertaken in literary studies seems rather modest.”

of a selective ideology and a literary tradition rather than as statements to be taken at face value.<sup>34</sup>

It is again indicative of her introspective agenda that Anna downplays the importance of Venetian assistance provided when Bohemond, by then prince of Antioch, invaded Romania in 1107–8.<sup>35</sup> The dominant theme in the first half of the *Alexiad* is the struggle between Robert Guiscard and Alexios, mirrored in the second half of the work by the struggle between Alexios and Bohemond, Robert's son. The Venetian role in the conflict of 1081–85 primarily contributed to Anna's assertion of Alexios's intelligence and persuasive skill in negotiations with Venice, which she represented as a crucial advantage in the war against Guiscard. She presumably considered that the Venetian role in the 1107–8 war did not usefully contribute to her aims. In relating the final confrontation between Bohemond and Alexios, she mentions only that the *basileus* warned the Venetians and others not to trust the Norman prince, a point that once again underlines Alexios's prudence and foresight.<sup>36</sup>

Anna's contemporary, Michael Italikos, also refers to Venetians in unflattering terms in an ἡθροποιία written before 1144, but his criticism of fellow Byzantines is even more pronounced, which relativizes the classification of Venetians as barbaric. The text adopts the perspective of Saint Stephanos the Protomartyr concerning one of his relics: Saint Stephanos bitterly mourns his fate of being sold to barbarians for the sake of profit, cursing that the "love of gold banishes me to the barbarians." Italikos, while criticizing his fellow Byzantines, may have been prompted in his designation of Venetians as barbaric by the robbery of the alleged remains of Saint Nikolaos from Myra by Venetians in the raids of the 1120s. Nevertheless, as a prominent representative of Byzantine learned culture (*paideia*) and a man of the Church, Italikos was making a point in condemning all such actions. His ἡθροποιία was likely employing the negative topoi associated with trade and the lack of appreciation by

34 See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 461–462: "Encomiasts might have been able to share the emperor's view of the world without being able to render it in terms of a rhetorical tradition which used foreigners as foils for native imperial virtue. In this, the prevailing, conventional characterization of the Latins may be less significant than the occasional nuance or differentiation which is to be found, especially in the orations of Eustathios. The only Westerners whom he unreservedly vilifies are the Venetians. [...] In all, then, the portrayal of the Latins in the encomia is not totally at odds with Manuel's policy of rapprochement."

35 Nicol (1988), pp. 64–65. For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

36 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.1.2, p. 359(19)–360(25). See Ch. 9 for the portrayal of Robert Guiscard and his son in the *Alexiad*.

some Venetians of educated Byzantine culture.<sup>37</sup> Both Italikos and Anna were, therefore, more likely making a point about values upheld by the social groups they associated with than they were expressing generally held beliefs concerning Venetian character traits.

Kinnamos deals with Venetians in the period prior to Manouel's reign only when he looks back at the political relations between the empire and Venice in order to contextualize Manouel's coup in 1171, and its justification is a major motive of his portrayal. In a manner not uncommon for Byzantine historians and their generic ethnography, Kinnamos introduces Venice into his account abruptly, although he presents the maritime republic more formally later in the narrative. He explains that "the Venetians' land [lies] at the farthest part of the Ionian gulf" (i.e., the Adriatic), a location not within easy reach of ships, and makes the following unfavorable comment: "The people [of Venice] are corrupted in character, ribald, more than any other, and rude, because they are filled with that ignorance of the beautiful which is characteristic for seamen." Relations were strained when Kinnamos was writing, but the remark may also reflect an opinion of Byzantine literati that Venetians failed to appreciate Byzantine culture and refinement. The "ignorance of the beautiful" or "lack of taste" (*ἀπειροκαλία*) contrasts with Byzantine *paideia* and aristocratic grace (*asteiōtēs*), both of which Kinnamos associates himself with. Again, Venetians are negatively linked to trade and commercial profit.<sup>38</sup>

Continuing this justification of Manouel's actions, Kinnamos recounts, although in less detail than the *Alexiad*, the Venetian support given to Alexios I against Robert Guiscard, emphasizing how it benefitted Venice. Like Anna, Kinnamos draws attention to the tax privileges the Venetians received for their support, connecting these privileges with his earlier generalization of their character:

Their immoderate enrichment from that source [their trade privileges and quarter in Constantinople] quickly elevated them to boastfulness. They used to treat the free man and citizen like a slave, not merely one

37 MICHAEL ITALIKOS, Works, no. 41, pp. 234–236; see p. 235(17): "χρυσού με πόθος ἐς βαρβάρους ὑπεροίξει." Venice (Οὐνετία) is mentioned on p. 236(27). See also Nicol (1988), pp. 72–73, 76; Devaney (2010), pp. 129–133. On the Venetian raids under Ioannes II mentioned by Kinnamos, see below, pp. 84–85. A Life of Saint Christodoulos, composed after 1191, also attests to the Western interest in and demand for Byzantine relics before the Fourth Crusade (on the part of the French King Philip II Augustus and the leaders of a Norman fleet in 1185/86): see Vranoussi (1976).

38 IOANNES KINNAMOS S, Hist., p. 280(14–24); see p. 280(23–24): "ἔστι δὲ τὸ ἔθνος ἦθει μὲν διεφθορός, βωμολόχον εἶπερ τι καὶ ἀνελεύθερον, ἄτε καὶ ἀπειροκαλίας μεστὸν ναυτικῆς."

of the many and the populace, but even one who took pride in the rank of *sebastos* and who had advanced to something greater among the Romans' grand [offices was scorned].<sup>39</sup>

Kinnamos offers this as a reason why Ioannes II expelled the Venetians, thereby connecting Manouel's actions against them with the legitimizing precedent established by his father. According to Kinnamos's history, the Venetians retaliated by sacking Chios, Rhodes, and Lesbos: "the wretches pursued a course of piracy by sea and had no mercy on mankind. Therefore the emperor admitted them on the previous terms, and raised them to still more bragging and arrogance."<sup>40</sup> The accuracy of this account of the sack and its aftermath is to be doubted: Kinnamos's brief account probably served primarily to justify Manouel's coup.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, it does not accord with other, more reliable, evidence which establishes that Venetian aggression was due to the refusal of Ioannes II to confirm Alexios's *chrysobull*.<sup>42</sup> Kinnamos, moreover, omits the struggle for Dalmatia, which was a bone of contention between the *Serenissima* and the empire.<sup>43</sup> Ioannes II, upon his accession, did not feel bound by his father's privilege for Venice. The threat posed by the Normans of southern Italy had diminished and relations with Venice had become strained during Alexios's final years. Ioannes thought he could persuade Venice to promise additional services in exchange for the renewal of the existing privilege. He certainly succeeded in demonstrating to the Venetians that they could not take their privileges for granted but underestimated their naval strength and willingness to use it in retaliation. In addition, he hoped to ensure that unruly behavior, such as the removal of relics, would not be repeated by reminding the Venetians of the respect and obedience owed to imperial authority.<sup>44</sup>

39 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 280(25)–281(10); see p. 281(5–10): "τοῖνον καὶ τὸ ἀσυμμέτρως ἐντεῦθεν πλουτεῖν ταχὺ ἐς ἀλαζονείαν αὐτοὺς ἤρεν. ἀνδρὶ μέντοι πολίτῃ ὅσα καὶ ἀνδραπόδῳ προσείχον, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὅπως τῶν πολλῶν τινι καὶ δημοτικῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τις ἐπὶ σεβαστότητι ἐφρόνει καὶ ἐπὶ μείζον τι προήκε τῶν παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις σεμνῶν."

40 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 281(10–19); see p. 281(16–19): "τὴν ἐν θαλάσῃ τε μετιόντες ληστεῖαν οὐδεμίαν οἱ κακοδαίμονες ἀνθρώπων ἐλάβανον φειδῶ. δι' ἃ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τοῖς προτέροις αὐτοὺς προσηκάμενος ἐπὶ μᾶλλον ἐξήρεν ἀλαζονείας καὶ τύφου."

For the privilege of 1126, see Dölger and Wirth (1995), nos. 1304–1305, pp. 189–190; Penna (2012), pp. 35–38.

41 Lilie (1984a), pp. 370–373; Devaney (2010), p. 138 and n. 32.

42 Lilie (1984a), p. 368.

43 Lilie (1984a), pp. 364–365, 367; Nicol (1988), pp. 77–80; Magdalino (1993b), p. 35.

44 Papageorgiou (2017), pp. 247–258.

Due to his evident agenda, Kinnamos obscures the fact that the aggression against Byzantium in 1122–26 and 1171–72 was exceptional and was authorized by the Venetian government and that, under normal circumstances, the imperial government shared a concern with Italian maritime powers to keep order at sea, ensuring the functioning of trade and the safety of ships, coastal areas, and islands. This was certainly one of the most powerful reasons for Byzantine-Italian cooperation. At least until the last two decades of the twelfth century, the Italian presence in the Aegean contributed to an alleviation of the problem of piracy.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the twelfth century was an age of increasing overall economic prosperity, to which Italian commerce contributed, even though the empire's economy remained predominantly agriculture based.<sup>46</sup>

Claims of mutual animosity between Byzantines and Venetians over the conflict of the 1120s therefore rely on very limited evidence.<sup>47</sup> In addition, they ignore plausible factors in the conflicts such as their contingency<sup>48</sup> and, crucially, the motivations of the sources that favored such claims and distortions of the historical occurrences. Accordingly, the hypothesis that widespread Byzantine-Venetian animosity was generally characteristic of the twelfth century and not just of exceptional phases, though possible, seems to be based on precarious evidence and is open to question.

### 1.2 *Cooperation, Coexistence, Conflict, and the Coup of 1171*

Apart from the Fourth Crusade and its aftermath in Choniates's *Historia*, most of the references to Venice occur in Kinnamos's and Choniates's portrayals of the reign of Manouel I, who was their contemporary, due to several major events under Manouel in which Venetians were involved: the war against Roger II during and after the Second Crusade, the emperor's coup against Venice in 1171, and finally the war and negotiations following the coup.

Choniates, like Kinnamos, brings up the Venetians in his account of the war against Roger II, but without introducing them and being more concerned with criticism of imperial policies. He states that "allied ships of the Venetians" (τῶν Οὐεντανῶν συμμαχίδες νῆες) and the fleet provided by the Byzantines divided the anchorages by the coast of Kerkyra, so that no quarrels would erupt and each would have a base from which to operate. The division may also evidence the de facto independence of Venice as a political power, but,

45 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 137–139.

46 Ahrweiler (1966), pp. 188–192; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 139–150; Angold (1997), p. 229; (1999), p. 273.

47 For an example of such a claim, see Devaney (2010), esp. pp. 142–147.

48 For this aspect see below.

Choniates relates, it was in vain and could not prevent a serious quarrel.<sup>49</sup> One reason the Byzantines needed Venetian support in this war was the neglect of the navy under Ioannes II, the only thing for which the *Historia* criticizes him.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps in another allusion to imperial failure and limited power, Choniates soberly refers to the Venetians as allies rather than as “servants” (δοῦλοι or *servi*). His designation thus contrasts with the chrysobulls of 1147 and 1148, issued in exchange for Venetian help against Roger.<sup>51</sup> In the chrysobull of 1187, the Venetians are “allied friends” (σύμμαχοι φίλοι or *federati amici*), an expression that, though less suggestive of subservience than *douloi*, still implies a subordination to the imperial power.<sup>52</sup>

This casual introduction is indicative of the secondary importance of Venice and how the discussion of non-Byzantine peoples primarily serves the imperial narrative of the historiography. Kinnamos recounts that during the second siege of Kerkyra (1149), which had been occupied by Roger II’s Normans, a brawl broke out between Byzantines and Venetians which the Byzantine admiral was unable to quell, requiring Manouel’s personal intervention. Kinnamos does not state the substance of the quarrel, merely commenting that his ruler punished the guilty on both sides.<sup>53</sup> In his concern to justify the coup of 1171, he adds to this elsewhere that Manouel “recognized the people of the Venetians as rebellious and irritable” (δυσσοῦν καὶ δύστροπον τὸ Οὐεννέτων κατανόησας ἔθνος). Therefore he considered it important to establish Ancona as a Byzantine base in Italy from which to wage wars, enabling the empire to remain independent of the Serenissima’s assistance and keep the pride (ὀφφῶς) of the Venetians in check.<sup>54</sup>

Choniates has more to say about the quarrel of 1149, which forms part of his narrative of imperial decline. The *Historia* relates that a serious dispute erupted between the rank and file of the Venetians and that of the Byzantines after an unfortunate assault on the fortress of Kerkyra, which, despite the collapse of a Byzantine siege ladder and the death of many soldiers, is regarded by Choniates as less damaging than the mutiny. The quarrel escalated to weapons

49 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 77(36)–78(39). See Lilie (1984a), p. 407 and n. 50.

50 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 55(5)–56(24). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 131, n. 50 (pp. 559–560).

51 Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1365, p. 212, no. 1373, pp. 215–216; Penna (2012), pp. 39–45.

52 See Brand (1968), p. 197; Penna (2012), p. 12, who argues that the privilege of 1187 was the first to have more of a double-sided character and contained obligations for Byzantium; Zorzi (2012), p. 136 (also on the unique form Οὐεντανοί that Choniates uses in this instance).

53 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 98(9–15).

54 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 170(11–15).



being drawn, leading to a mortal fight. Men from the imperial family, Byzantine commanders, and senior Venetians vainly attempted to intervene; the heavily armed Byzantines and the Venetian mercenaries were eager for battle. The μέγας δομέστικος, realizing the Venetian intent, ordered his personal guard and a part of the army to attack, which drove the Venetians back to their ships.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps influenced by (propagandistic) source material, like Kinnamos, and as an expression of the contrasting markers of identity between the supposed barbarians and Byzantines of Choniates's social rank, the history states that due to their "barbaric attitude" and inability to endure inferiority, the beastlike Venetians were unrestrained in their defeat. Choniates relates that they made for an island, perhaps Asteris,<sup>56</sup> and, as if at war with Romania, destroyed Byzantine ships from Euboea. The *Historia* then relates the following incident that followed from this quarrel, the portrayal of which is part of its *Kaiserkritik*:

Adding to this damage was another one, which was more extraordinary: they stole the ship of the emperor and, after they had set it up for themselves first, decorated the imperial lodging with draperies interwoven with gold and purple carpets, then, after having had a smartish manikin mount the ship, an Ethiopian with black skin, they greeted him as emperor, carrying him all around in procession with a splendid crown, thus they ridiculed the solemn imperial ceremonies and mocked the lord Manouel, for he did not have blond hair like grain, but his complexion was dark, like the bride in the Song of Songs saying "I am black and beautiful, for the sun has seen me."<sup>57</sup>

55 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 85(40)–86(76). A little earlier in the narrative (p. 77[21–29]), it is emphasized that Ioannes II's measures greatly strengthened the Byzantine army, which means that it was relatively effective at that time.

56 Choniates says that he is unsure whether it was that particular island, but his explanation of its location, citing "the ancients" (οἱ πάλαι), suggests that he brings it up in order to demonstrate his erudition. Again, it may be the case that he did not find it worthwhile to investigate and that a lack of information was not the (main) issue.

57 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 86(77)–86): "Τῷ κακῷ δὲ τούτῳ καὶ ἕτερον ἀτοπώτερον ἐπιφέροντες τὴν βασιλίδαν νῆα κλοποφοροῦσι καὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῖς θέμενοι πρῶτα μὲν τὰς ἐν αὐτῇ βασιλικὰς διατιήσεις κοσμοῦσι πέπλοις χρυσοῦφέσι καὶ ἀλουργοῖς τάπησιν, ἔπειτα δ' αὐτῇ ἐμβιβάσαντες ἀνδράριον ἐπίτριπτον, κελεχρῶτά τινα Αἰθίοπα, εὐφήμου ὡς βασιλέα Ῥωμαίων περιάγοντες μετὰ λαμπρᾶς στεφανηφορίας καὶ προπομπῆς, τὰ τῆς βασιλείας σεμνὰ διαπαίζοντες καὶ καταμωκῶμενοι τὸν ἀνακτα Μανουὴλ ὡς μὴ ξανθίζοντα τὴν κόμην ὡς θέρος, ἀλλ' ὑπομελανόμενον τὴν μορφὴν κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ἄσματος νύμφην τὴν λέγουσαν „μέλαινά εἰμι καὶ καλή, ὅτι παρέβλεψέ με ὁ ἥλιος." This incident, if based on a historical event, is unsurprisingly omitted in Kinnamos's encomiastic history.

Choniates likely included this episode to convey an image of imperial decline, which is omnipresent in his work. The mocking of Byzantine court ceremonies, imperial power, and the emperor himself certainly displayed defiance of imperial authority.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the passage indicates that imperial ceremony was sometimes ridiculed because of the discrepancy between the display of imperial power and the reality of the Byzantine government's impotence. It had been unable to stop the Venetian raids of the 1120s, just as it failed to prevent the atrocities the mutineers now committed.<sup>59</sup> The episode may also have been a part of the propaganda spread against Venice in connection with Manouel's coup of 1171.<sup>60</sup> At any rate, Choniates's account suggests that the *basileus* now had, should he desire it, ample justification to punish anyone so barbarous as to mock the emperor.

The Venetians, however, went unpunished by Manouel, and what follows indicates realpolitik, but also proximity with them. The *Historia* emphasizes that the ruler was concerned about the possibility of civil war (ἐμφύλιος πόλεμος),<sup>61</sup> and that such a conflict would have made winning the war against the Normans extremely difficult. It is indicative that a potential war against the Venetians would be termed "civil" (ἐμφύλιος), suggesting that Venetians were more familiar than were other peoples, and that Venice, even if its de facto independence was recognized, was still considered a part of the empire.

Nevertheless, although Manouel reconciled the Venetians, Choniates misleadingly states that the emperor merely concealed his anger and postponed the punishment of his unfaithful servants to a more favorable occasion—namely, the coup of 1171—when, according to the historian, the smoldering blaze of Manouel's anger turned into a bright flame.<sup>62</sup> The *Historia*, with hindsight, greatly exaggerates the significance of an incident—the historicity of

58 Spatharakis (1976), p. 209 and n. 7; Hill (1999), pp. 88–89, 91; Stone (2000), pp. 240, 249–251; Zorzi (2012), p. 144; Hatzaki (2013), pp. 42, 240. In relation to using an Ethiopian to mock the emperor, it is worth noting that Manouel's father, Emperor Ioannes, was known for such a complexion and that ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.8.5, p. 185(41–45), unfavorably describes the birth of the dark-skinned baby Ioannes, who is depicted as a light-skinned *basileus* in the famous Hagia Sophia mosaic. Manouel's swarthy complexion was also positively associated with military masculinity, however. On all this, see Hatzaki (2009), p. 134; (2013), pp. 239–240, 249. For Byzantine literary approaches to beauty, see also Ch. 3, esp. p. 163.

59 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 246–247.

60 See below.

61 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 86(87–89).

62 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 86(87)–87(95).

which is not firmly established—in order to connect it rhetorically with an event that occurred decades later.

The renewed cooperation with Venice following the quarrel endured, and its portrayal again points to Venice's political and military importance as well as common and conflicting interests. Choniates recounts that Michael Palaiologos, entrusted by the emperor with the conduct of the war against the Normans of southern Italy, recruited a mercenary army in Venice.<sup>63</sup> Kinnamos makes plain, however, that Venice was only willing to support the emperor against the Normans as long as neither side threatened to acquire an overpowering position in the Adriatic, confirming the Venetian strategic aim of maintaining a balance of power. It was for this reason that the Venetians were unsupportive of the war against the king of Sicily in 1155–56, willing to assist Byzantium when the empire was threatened by a Norman offensive in 1147–49, and reluctant to engage in a German-Byzantine offensive against Roger II in 1149–52/53.<sup>64</sup> Kinnamos mentions that shortly after the recapture of Kerkyra (that is, a few years before the major offensive against the Normans), the general Ioannes Axouchos failed to sail to Ancona with the army entrusted to him to pillage Italy, perhaps because the Venetians' leader advised against it: "lest the Romans become possessed of Italy and then, being established as neighbors to their land, they would probably be able to despise them and would desire their alliance very little."<sup>65</sup> Kinnamos's presentation, however, may just as well be the result of hostile Byzantine-Venetian relations in the 1170s–80s when he was composing his history, or it might also reflect hostility to Axouchos.<sup>66</sup>

The subsequent narrative confirms this characterization of Venice. After the Byzantine campaign in southern Italy against William I of Sicily failed, Manouel tried again to advance his interests in Italy by sending an agent to Ancona. Alexios Axouchos was dispatched with the goal of acquiring independence from Venetian naval help.<sup>67</sup> However, during the subsequent struggle against Frederick Barbarossa—particularly in the 1160s—Manouel maintained the alliance with Venice. Kinnamos refers to an embassy under Nikephoros

63 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 9(10–16). On the historical context, see Zorzi (2012), p. 148.

64 Lilie (1984a), pp. 418–419; Nicol (1988), pp. 85–86; Magdalino (1993b), p. 61. On Venice's reluctance to support a coalition of Conrad III, Pisa, Genoa, and Manouel against Roger II, see Lilie (1984a), p. 415.

65 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 102(6–11); see p. 102(8–11): "ὥς μὴ Ἰταλίας ἐγκρατεῖς Ῥωμαῖοι γεγονότες χώρα τε ἐν γειτόνων ἤδη καταστάντες τῇ αὐτῶν περιφρονεῖν αὐτοὺς ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς ἔχοιεν καὶ συμμαχίας δλίγα τῆς ἐξ αὐτῶν χρῆζοιεν."

66 See Lilie (1984a), pp. 409–410, who points out that Byzantium's German allies failed to appear in Italy. See also, however, Magdalino (1993b), p. 54 and n. 97.

67 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 170(4–20).

Chalouphes, who gave a speech before the doge and high-ranking Venetians that focused on the common interest of Venice and Byzantium to work together against Frederick's increasing power. The speech reassured the Venetians of the emperor's estimation of their qualities, namely shrewdness (ἀγχίνοια), good will (εὐνοῦς) towards the empire,<sup>68</sup> and considerateness (εὐγνωμοσύνη). It also emphasized that Venice, among all those who were "under his [i.e., the emperor's] sway" (ὑπὸ τὴν παλάμην αὐτοῦ), received Manouel's principal solicitude (πρώτη κηδεμονία). The Venetians are said to have welcomed Chalouphes's words and they, together with other Italian cities, subsequently worked with the Byzantines to strengthen the alliance against Frederick.<sup>69</sup> It is evident that they did so in their own interest, striving to maintain a balance between the Holy Roman Empire, the kingdom of Sicily, and Romania. These strategic aims, which could be portrayed as insufficiently loyal to the emperor, were helpful to Kinnamos's attempt to convey the legitimacy and justice of Manouel's actions against those who owed him allegiance. Later in the narrative, Kinnamos adds that the agreement concerning Frederick encouraged the renewal of previous treaties and, in addition to promising perpetual opposition to the German ruler, the Venetians also committed to defending Romania against any other aggressor and supporting the imperial navy with 100 ships.<sup>70</sup> It is apparent from the context that this fleet assisted the Byzantines in establishing their rule in Dalmatia against Hungary, which happened also to be an enemy of Venice at that time.

Both Kinnamos and Choniates omit this political background to their presentation of the coup of 1171; their focus is on justifying the coup by vilifying Venetians, their behavior, and general character in an undifferentiated manner, Choniates presumably as a result of his employment of propagandistic source material, and Kinnamos due to his encomiastic aims. The final victory over Hungary in 1167 brought the Byzantines uncomfortably close to the borders of the Serenissima, and a major setback by Frederick Barbarossa in Italy forced Venice to change its priorities and its relationship with Romania. Manouel, for his part, was not yet ready to turn against the republic, as he would be from the summer of 1170. In 1168–70, Venice saw the re-emergence of the German threat in Italy and concluded that Hungary's interests in Dalmatia were incompatible with its own. This led to a short renewal of cooperation with Byzantium. However, in the summer of 1170, Manouel issued a chrysobull for

68 On the term εὐνοια and its precise meaning of loyalty of subjects to the emperor, see Lamma (1968), p. 392, n. 1.

69 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 229(15)–231(2).

70 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 237(1–6).

Genoa—which was preceded by two preliminary treaties—and a new one for Pisa. At the same time, negotiations with Frederick appeared to offer the possibility of reviving the alliance with the Holy Roman Empire that had existed in the 1130s to 1150s.<sup>71</sup>

Kinnamos and Choniates are not in agreement concerning the reasons for the imperial decision to finally turn against Venice in 1171, which points to their different motivations. Kinnamos was likely under the influence of propaganda against Venice, the republic being in a state of war with Byzantium when he was composing his historical work.<sup>72</sup> He emphasizes the aforesaid faults of the Venetians: immoderate pursuit of wealth, boastfulness, and arrogance.

Interestingly, and despite Kinnamos's political agenda to vilify the Venetians, the narrative intensifies its censure of their faults in a fashion that draws attention to the proximity between Venetians and Byzantines in daily life, especially in the capital, but also in other places in the empire where the Serenissima had a presence. Kinnamos indicates that Venice was aware of its strengths, especially the importance of its navy for Romania, and that the representatives of the republic were likely not reluctant to point them out:

Stubbornness which appears to be successful [referring to the Venetian victory against Ioannes II in 1126] is capable of being swept on to madness. Therefore they inflicted blows on many of the wellborn who were related to the emperor by blood, and generally insulted them grievously. Even in the time of Emperor Manouel, they no less continued the same practices, taking for themselves Roman women and dwelling like other Romans in their houses outside the residential area granted them by the emperor.<sup>73</sup>

Although some Venetians earned opprobrium, it is plausible that only a small proportion of the Venetians in the empire engaged in offensive behavior.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the disdain for trade in literary sources did not correspond to actual practice, nor were Italian residents perceived solely as merchants or seamen.<sup>75</sup>

71 Lilie (1984a), pp. 467–489.

72 Cesaretti (1988), p. 218.

73 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 281(19)–282(2): “αὐθάδεια γὰρ κατοθορὸν δόξασα εἰς ἀπόνοιαν ἐκφέρεσθαι οἶδεν. ὅθεν καὶ πολλοῖς τῶν εὖ γεγονότων βασιλεῖ τε καθ' αἶμα προσηκόντων πληγὰς τε ἐπέθεντο καὶ ἄλλως πικρότατα ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὕβρισαν. διήγον μέντοι ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς οὐχ ἥμιστα καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν Μανουὴλ βασιλέως χρόνων, γυναιξί τε Ῥωμαίαις ἑαυτοὺς συνοικίζοντες καὶ οἰκίαις ταῖς αὐτῶν, ὥσπερ οἱ ἄλλοι Ῥωμαῖοι ἔξω τῆς ἐκ βασιλέως δεδομένης αὐτοῖς ἀναστρεφόμενοι διατριβῆς.”

74 Neocleous (2013b), p. 225.

75 See above, pp. 76–77.

It should be doubted, as well, whether it was considered problematic that Venetians lived outside the Venetian quarter, which the sources generally accept as a matter of course.<sup>76</sup> It was for this reason, according to Kinnamos, that the emperor created for those Venetians who settled permanently in Romania a specific status: that of βουργέσιοι. As the narrative explains, this term was adopted from the Latin tongue. Although using a Latin rather than a Greek term was perhaps a sign of special consideration, it was not unusual, since the Byzantines—Greek-speaking Romans—had always employed words of Latin origin.<sup>77</sup> The new status meant that the Venetians owed the emperor fealty just as his Byzantine subjects did, “for the name [burgesses or citizens] is to be interpreted thus for them.”<sup>78</sup>

It should be emphasized that the status of and relationship with Venetians, and more generally Italian and other Latin residents, was not comparable with the situation of more segregated groups, notably the Jewish population.<sup>79</sup>

Manouel officially recognized, thereby, the coexistence of Venetians and Byzantines in Constantinople. A passage in Ptochoprodromos suggests that a strong Venetian presence in the capital was taken for granted: the poet refers to a monk who was dispatched by his superiors to ask Venetians the price of cheese. Many in the capital probably bought directly from Venetians, and, combined with the evidence from Italian inventories, Byzantine sources indicate that the “the typical Constantinopolitan neighborhood” was characterized by “the mixture of functions, buildings, occupants and owners existing side by side.”<sup>80</sup>

In order again to reinforce the legitimacy of Manouel’s coup and to explain why he acted at this precise point in time, Kinnamos raises the issue of a Venetian attack against houses of the “Lombards” in the capital, by which he means the Genoese. This attack resulted in the destruction of the Genoese

76 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 172(65–78), also indicates that the Venetians had houses not only in their quarter and that at least some of them were also married to Byzantine women, which indicates a well-established presence and co-existence. See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 122–123; Zorzi (2012), p. 251.

77 Kahane and Kahane (1982).

78 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 282(2–8); see p. 282(7–8): “τοῦτο γὰρ ἐρμηνεύειν αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομα βούλεται.”

On the *bourgessioi*, see also Brand (1968), p. 205; Penna (2012), pp. 200–203.

79 On the situation of Jews in the Byzantine Empire, representations of and attitudes toward them, see Bonfil et al. (2012), esp. the contributions by Fishman-Duker and Von Falkenhausen; Holo (2013).

80 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 122–123.

quarter.<sup>81</sup> It is an open question whether, as it is alleged, the Venetians refused to rebuild the houses and threatened to repeat atrocities they had committed against the emperor's father, Ioannes. Kinnamos may well have cast the incident in that light with hindsight to justify the emperor's subsequent actions. Manouel is reported to have ordered the arrest of Venetians throughout the empire, not just in facilities belonging to the government, but also in monasteries. A prominent Venetian escaped with a large ship that the emperor had acquired from him, but to whom Manouel entrusted its care.<sup>82</sup>

Kinnamos's narration includes the comment that the Venetians were prepared for a Byzantine attack with "Median" (i.e., Greek) fire "because they were familiar with Roman ways," another indication of proximity and familiarity. War with Venice followed, and Venetians engaged in piracy, similarly to the 1120s.<sup>83</sup>

The description of this war in Kinnamos's history includes a letter from Manouel to the Venetian government. This letter constitutes a further justification of the emperor's actions against the Serenissima and reaffirms Byzantine superiority against Venice's challenge, Byzantium being portrayed as the mother of the city:

From a long time back your people has displayed great ignorance regarding what ought to be done. For when you formerly poured into the Romans' republic as wanderers really gripped by poverty, you showed strong disdain towards them. You had a great ambition to betray them to their enemies; it is superfluous to enumerate in detail what your present circumstances are. Detected thereby, you were justly expelled from their land. Out of vainglory you decided that a conflict with them would be on equal terms, [you] a people not even anciently worthy of the name, but at length now well known on account of the Romans, yet not comparable in strength: imagining this, you have incurred much laughter from every hand. How can that be? With them [the Byzantines] not even the pick of peoples, anywhere whatsoever, could wage war unpunished.<sup>84</sup>

81 The attack occurred in the year preceding Manouel's coup, i.e., 1170: see Zorzi (2012), p. 250.

82 On this ship, also mentioned by Choniates and Latin sources, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 251–252.

83 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 282(8)–285(6).

84 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 285(8–19): "ἀμαθία πολλή περι τὰ πρακτέα τὸ ὑμῶν ἀνωθεν κέχρηται ἔθνος. πάλαι μὲν γὰρ ἀλήται καὶ πενία δεινῶς κάτοχοι εἰς τὴν Ῥωμαίων εἰσπερρηγότες πολιτεῖαν ὑπεροψία τῆ πολλῆ ἐς αὐτοὺς ἐχρήσθη καὶ τοῖς πολεμιατάτοις αὐτοὺς προδιδόναί

Manouel probably did send a letter to Venice, but in a different form to the one supposedly quoted by Kinnamos. The content may have been quite different as well, for Kinnamos was adapting it to the context of his narrative.<sup>85</sup> Neither Kinnamos nor Choniates mention the struggle for Dalmatia or Manouel's plan to renew the alliance with the Holy Roman Empire, although both these matters must have been important factors inducing the government's offensive against Venice.<sup>86</sup> This supports the hypothesis that Choniates, for his part, mainly relied on imperial sources seeking to justify the measure, whereas Kinnamos, in pursuing his goal to place blame on Venice, consciously omitted both subjects insofar as he had knowledge of them.

Like Kinnamos, Choniates recognizes the coup of 1171 as a major political change of course and uses it as an occasion to discuss Venetians generally and to reiterate their character traits. He notes that they lived in the farthest corner of the Adriatic, and, like his predecessors Anna and Kinnamos, he refers to the "Enetoi, whom one might call Venetians according to the specific character of language" (Ἐνετοὶ νέμονται, οὓς καὶ Βενετικούς εἶποι τις ἂν κατὰ γλώττης ιδιότητα) as "children of the sea" (θαλάττης τρόφιμοι) and "vagrants in the manner of Phoenicians" (κατὰ Φοίνικας ἀγύρται). Perhaps with the previously narrated quarrels as well as the war and the Venetian aggression following the 1171 coup in mind, he calls them "clever in spirit" (πανοῦργοι τὸ φρόνημα). The reason he gives for their admittance to the empire is that the Byzantines needed their assistance in a naval war, probably an allusion to the Byzantine-Norman conflict of 1081–85.<sup>87</sup> Choniates then comments:

In swarms and clans they exchanged their city with that of Konstantinos and from there spread everywhere in the dominion of the Romans, retaining only their original name; for the rest, they were integrated and Romans in everything, all in a tumble they prospered in their midst. But having acquired a great wealth, they began to behave in an arrogant and insolent fashion, so much so that they not only threatened the Romans

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μεγίστη φιλοτιμία παρ' ὑμῖν ἦν· ἅπερ ἐν εἰδόσιν ἀριθμείσθαι τὰ νῦν ἐστί περιττόν. ἔξ οὗ δὲ καταφανεῖς γεγονότες ἐνδίκως τῆς αὐτῶν ἐξωστράκισθε γῆς, ὑπὸ ἀλαζονείας καὶ εἰς ἀντίπαλον αὐτοῖς καταστῆναι ἐγνώκατε μάχην, ἔθνος πάλαι μὲν οὐδὲ ὀνόματος ἄξιον, διὰ Ῥωμαίους δὲ νῦν τέως ἐμφανές, οὐχ ὅσον μέντοι καὶ τὰ πρὸς δύναμιν συμβλητόν, ὅπερ αὐτοὶ νομίσαντες πολλὴν ἀπανταχῆ διωφλήσατε γέλωτα. πῶς γάρ; οἷς οὐδὲ τὰ ἐξαιρετώτατα τῶν ὅπου δῆποτε ἂν ἀθῶως ἀντιπολεμήσαιντο ἔθνῶν."

85 Kresten (1997), pp. 37–44.

86 Lilie (1984a), p. 493, Magdalino (1993b), pp. 93–94; Angold (1997), p. 231.

87 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 171(41–48). On the Latin background of the Byzantine adoption of the name Βενέτικοι, see Zorzi (2012), p. 248.



with hostility but were also indifferent to the threats and orders of the emperor. So the emperor changed his inclination with respect to them, now remembering the derisory insults suffered in Kerkyra, then witnessing another perfidy, then another worse outrage irritated his spirit, he thundered in his heart as does the sea, tempestuous from the blowing north-east or north wind.<sup>88</sup>

Choniates's description suggests that among the Italians, and possibly all Latins who dwelt in Constantinople with the exception of mercenaries of all origins, Venetians were the most numerous group, which is largely agreed upon in the scholarship.<sup>89</sup> His use of the expression "clan" (φατρία or φράτρα) has highly negative connotations and is probably connected with anti-Venetian propaganda and literary approaches to the business of trade.<sup>90</sup> The degree of proximity that he emphasizes is congruent with Kinnamos's account and corresponds to what is said later in the *Historia*.<sup>91</sup> It is a testament to the integration and assimilation capacities of the Byzantine polity.<sup>92</sup> As for the affirmation of arrogance and insolence, it appears to reflect again the traditionally negative portrayal of the trading profession in Greek literature,<sup>93</sup> the behavior of some Venetians, certainly with notable counter-examples, the lack of Venetian

88 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, 171(48–60): “κατὰ σμήνη καὶ φατρίας τὴν Κωνσταντίνου τῆς οἰκείας ἠλλάξαντο, ὅθεν ἀπανταχῆ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐπικρατείας διασπαρέντες καὶ μόνον τὸ ἀπὸ γένους ὄνομα παραμεμενηκὸς αὐτοῖς ἔχοντες, τὰ δ' ἄλλα σύμφυλοι ὄντες καὶ πάνυ Ῥωμαῖοι ἠϋξάνοντό τε καὶ ἐχρυσίζον. οὐκοῦν καὶ περιβαλόμενοι πλοῦτον πολλὸν αὐθάδειαν τε καὶ ἀναίδειαν μετεδίωκον, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀναρσίως ἔχειν Ῥωμαίοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν ἀνεπιστροφῶς ἀπειλῶν τε καὶ ἐντολῶν. Μεταλλοῖοι τοίνυν τὰς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ῥοπὰς βασιλεῦς, καὶ νῦν μὲν τοῦ κατὰ Κέρκυραν μεμνημένος ἐμπαροινήματος, νῦν δ' ἄλλου πείραν λαμβάνων κακοῦ, αὐθις δ' ἐτέρου καὶ χειρόνος πανουργεύματος τὴν ἐκείνου διαρριπίζοντος ψυχὴν, εἰς θυμὸν ἐρρόχθησεν, ὡσπερ ὑπὸ καικίου ἢ ἀπαρκτίου ἄλμη καταγιγιδῶδες καὶ ἄγριον πνέοντος.”

89 Brand (1968), pp. 204–205; Laiou (1998b), p. 173.

90 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 63, n. 178 (pp. 585–586); Zorzi (2012), p. 250.

91 See Zorzi (2012), pp. 249–250, who draws attention to the lack of documentary evidence of the twelfth century, which would probably have confirmed the impression gained from the literary sources.

92 It is also consistent with a remark about the integration of “Scythian” (perhaps Pecheneg) troops in NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* III.II, p. 233(8–9): “[They were] not [part] of the foreigners and mercenaries, but of those who had long ago placed themselves voluntarily under the empire of the Romans” (οὐ τῶν ξένων καὶ μισθοφόρων, ἀλλὰ τῶν πρὸ πολλοῦ αὐτομολησάντων ὑπὸ τὴν βασιλείαν Ῥωμαίων). See also Neville (2012), pp. 70, 84–85.

93 The comparison to Phoenicians in the *Historia* is especially interesting in that regard because the trading profession of a Phoenician was also negatively portrayed by Homer (*Odyssey* XIV 288–290). See Zorzi (2012), p. 249.

appreciation for the cultured life of upper Byzantine social strata, and probably the influence of propaganda in connection with Manouel's coup.<sup>94</sup>

Choniates's account in the *Historia* provides a detail that Kinnamos typically omits, one supporting a narrative of imperial decline. When the Venetian properties were seized by command of the emperor, "the imperial treasury held goods collected from many places, but the local governors appropriated the bigger share to themselves". The statement clearly implies that the governors were corrupt, in line with what Choniates has to say elsewhere. He also corroborates Kinnamos's report of the large ship in which some Venetians escaped and emphasizes the ship's purported size.<sup>95</sup>

### 1.3 *An Uneasy Restoration of Relations Marked by Imperial Failure*

Only Choniates's account relates what happened following the war with Venice.<sup>96</sup> After the unsuccessful Venetian offensive against Byzantium in 1171–72, the Serenissima entered an alliance with William II of Sicily, now hostile toward Manouel, in order to take revenge. It was the threat of a united Venetian-Sicilian attack that motivated the emperor to enter negotiations for the renewal of privileges for Venice.<sup>97</sup>

Choniates once again characterizes the Venetians as shrewd merchants, intent on their advantage:

94 See Laiou (1998b), p. 176: "L'ensemble des sobriquets négatifs appliqués aux Vénitiens se rapportent à des périodes de crise aiguë dans les relations vénéto-byzantines [such as those in 1149 and the time following the coup of 1171] [...] Les Vénitiens mentionnées dans les sources le sont en tant qu'ennemis de l'état et il n'est pas surprenant de les voir assimilés au portrait du baron occidental jetant un regard cupide sur l'empire, sur ses terres et ses richesses." For the negative characterization of Venice in historiography and imperial panegyric after 1171, see above, pp. 90–95.

95 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 172(65–72); see p. 172 (66–67): "τὰ μὲν εἶχε τὸ βασιλικὸν θησαυροφυλάκιον ξυνεχθέντα ὀπόθεν, τὰ πλείω δὲ οἱ τοπαρχοῦντες ἐξιδιώσαντο."

96 It is possible that Kinnamos's history originally included a narration of these events during Manouel's last years, but, if so, it is now lost.

97 It should be noted that contrary to the impression given by Choniates, a final agreement with Venice appears to have been reached only under Andronikos I, possibly confirmed by an imperial chrysobull. However, Manouel did come to some understanding with the republic and released Venetian prisoners in 1179. See Brand (1968), p. 20; Lilie (1984a), pp. 515–518; Nicol (1988), p. 101; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1532, pp. 272–273; Zorzi (2012), p. 253. As Choniates wrote many years later, the matter presumably was of little consequence to him. On the Venetian-Norman treaty of 1175, which was not primarily directed against Romania, but may have been perceived thus by the Byzantine government, see Lilie (1984a), pp. 504–507.

These treaties [with William II of Sicily] could not be abandoned: but even so, the emperor was successful in drawing them [the Venetians] to his side and conceded forgiveness to them as well as the friendship [i.e., subordination from a Byzantine ideological standpoint] which they requested. He renewed the rights which put them on a par with Roman citizens and did not refuse to restore as much of their property as was kept in the imperial treasury. They, having taken the road which seemed more profitable to them and certainly free of inconveniences, dropped the requirement to restore their private properties with a mercantile attitude and practice and unanimously agreed that they should receive 15 kentenaria [hundreds] of gold [ca. half a ton] in exchange for what they had lost, and they received them not all at once, but [they were] supplied to them in several rates.<sup>98</sup>

It also emerges from this passage that Venetians who resided in Romania enjoyed the special status of *isopoliteia*, thus holding the same status as Roman citizens. It is unclear precisely what this entailed in the middle Byzantine period due to the lack of available documentation, but it does denote a degree of proximity with Romania that was not ascribed to other non-Byzantine populations.<sup>99</sup>

In his general discussion of Manouel's Western policies, Choniates praises the arrangements with Venice and other Latin powers highly. He recognizes that the *basileus* was strategically astute to seek alliances with Western powers, otherwise some of them might unite against Romania with their superior numbers and wealth, an acknowledgment of the increasing prosperity of Italian maritime republics and cities, but more generally of the economic expansion in the West. Further, one of the Western kings might attain enough power to pose a major threat. Because of their tendency to be proud, bloodthirsty,

98 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, 173(14)–174(22): “τούτων δὲ μὴ ἀθετουμένων καὶ οὕτως αὐτοὺς ἐπεσπάσατο, καὶ ἀνεξικακίαν αἰτουμένοις καὶ φιλίαν προσέειπεν. ὅσα τοίνυν ἔθιμα ἦν αὐτοῖς ἰσοπολίταις οὕσι Ῥωμαίοις ἀνανεωσάμενος οὐδὲ τοῦ ἀποδοῦναι γοῦν ἀπέσχετο ἄπερ τῆς οὐσίας σφῶν ἢ βασιλεῖος γὰρά ἔστυγεν. οἱ δὲ τὴν κερδαλεωτέραν, ὡς αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει, καὶ οὐμενοῦν ἀργαλεωτέραν τραπόμενοι τὸν μὲν ἀναδασμὸν τῶν οἰκειῶν χρημάτων χαίρειν εἶασαν ἐμπορικόν τι καὶ δραστήριον ἐνόησαντες, ἐκ δὲ συμφώνου συνήλθοσαν δέκα πρὸς τοῖς πέντε χρυσοῦ λήψεσθαι κεντηνάρια ἀνθ' ὧν ἀπώλεσαν, καὶ εἶχον ταῦτα οὐχ ἅμα, πολλάκις δὲ χορηγούμενα.”

For an explanation of the term κεντηνάριον, a unit of measurement of Roman origin, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 397, n. 84 (p. 624).

99 Zorzi (2012), pp. 253–254. The term is also applied to the inhabitants of Ancona, important allies of Manouel I in Italy; see below, p. 137.

and insolent, and because of their iron will, the Western peoples were to be feared.<sup>100</sup>

This generalizing assessment needs to be placed in the context of Choniates's history as a whole, but it certainly reflects a sense of threat and tension stemming from conflicts that Choniates and his contemporaries had witnessed, notably the Sicilian attack of 1185, Emperor Henry VI's threats of invasion backed up by his acquisition of the Sicilian kingdom, acts of Latin piracy, and other earlier occurrences. Hence perhaps also the generalizing accusation of "unresting resentment against the Romans and always exercising enmity against them" (δύσσουν κατὰ Ῥωμαίων ἀκοίμητον καὶ φιλεχθρεῖν αἰεὶ κατὰ τούτων), which, however, is immediately followed by the statement that the emperor managed to convince Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Ancona and various other Western peoples along the coast of the Mediterranean to be "friendly to the Romans" (φίλια Ῥωμαίους). Elsewhere in his work, Choniates describes other alliances and friendly relations with Westerners, including personal ones.<sup>101</sup> As with the statement about the alleged vast chasm of difference between Latins and Byzantines in the context of the fall of Thessalonike,<sup>102</sup> it stands to reason that Choniates's negative rhetoric is hyperbolic and must be weighed against his contrary indications. Taking everything into account, the historiographer's general message might be that while danger did emanate from the West, it was by no means a united, hostile block: friendlier relations, mutual understandings, and the successful integration of Westerners in Romania were desirable. The *Historia* therefore approves of Manouel's policy, which could be described as one of "divide and rule". All this supports the previously discussed characterization of Byzantine-Western relations as fickle and ambivalent.<sup>103</sup>

Choniates's narrative becomes virtually silent on Venice and Venetians until the Fourth Crusade when it again engages in strong introspective criticism. This is despite Andronikos I's negotiations with Venice to restore relations and new chrysobulls for the Serenissima under Isaakios II and Alexios III.<sup>104</sup> When relating the beginnings of the baneful crusade, however, Choniates reflects on relations with the republic under the Angeloi brothers in order to criticize these two emperors for their treatment of Venetians, censuring them for extorting money in violation of valid agreements and for encouraging Pisans

100 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 199(41)–200(65).

101 See below.

102 See below and Ch. 9, p. 304.

103 See Introduction, esp. pp. 13–14.

104 PRIVILEGES FOR VENICE, pp. 77–137; Dölger and Wirth (1995), nos. 1576–1578, pp. 292–294, no. 1590, p. 299, no. 1647, pp. 326–328; Penna (2012), pp. 46–99.

to agitate against their competitors. He especially blames Alexios, for this emperor, “being parsimonious” (κιμβικευόμενος), is said to have withheld the last two κεντηγάρια (ca. 64 kilograms) of gold out of the fifteen promised by Manouel. In relation to the Latin conquest of 1204, Choniates appears to criticize Manouel, Andronikos, and the Angeloi, by recounting how their behavior fueled the hatred of the doge Enrico Dandolo.<sup>105</sup> However, what is tentatively suggested by the *Historia* emerges more strongly from Western sources, which indicate that Alexios III’s government favored Venice the least.<sup>106</sup> At any rate, Choniates’s statement certainly corresponds to his tendency to chiefly blame the Byzantines themselves and their rulers for the catastrophe of 1204. It implies that the Venetian disregard of the privilege of 1198, which clearly amounted to an official recognition of Alexios III as legitimate emperor, was justified by Alexios’s own violation of the rights he had granted to Venice, indeed making it easier for the republic to support the claim of the young Alexios (IV).<sup>107</sup>

This criticism does not spare Alexios IV either: together with his father, the restored Isaakios II, he withdrew support in the capital from the Pisans and favored the Venetians. Choniates condemns this as highly disadvantageous for the Byzantines, noting that the Pisans had bravely defended the city from a Latin attack.<sup>108</sup>

Choniates’s harsh words for the Venetians should be put in the context not only of his criticism of his rulers for their treatment of them, thus relieving the doge and the republic of some blame, but also of what he reveals concerning his escape after the fall of Constantinople. When the crusaders plundered the city, Choniates and his family sought shelter close to Hagia Sophia, their luxurious house having been destroyed by the second of the fires that ravaged the city, yet hiding from the conquerors was futile. The family was fortunate in having a Venetian “friend and housemate” (συνήθης τε καὶ συνέστιος), to whom Choniates had granted protection. It is unclear whether this friend had sought refuge in the official’s household because of an attack by the populace<sup>109</sup> or for some other reason. Another version of the history identifies him as a wine

105 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 537(50)–538(85).

106 Brand (1968), p. 200; Lilie (1984a), pp. 581–582; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 243, n. 243 (p. 531).

107 Minniti Colonna (1991), esp. pp. 134–138.

108 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 552(84–90).

109 Plausibly in 1187 or 1203, for there were hardly any Venetians in Constantinople at the time of the riots of 1182 according to Lilie (1984a), pp. 532–535, and Nicol (1988), p. 107. Nesbitt (2003), however, argues that a seal of Doge Orto Mastropietro (1178–92), found at the location of Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul, indicates that a Venetian fled to the monastery there during the 1182 riots.

merchant by the name of Dominikos,<sup>110</sup> and he may have been one of the *bourgesioi* mentioned by Kinnamos.<sup>111</sup> Dominikos persuaded the Latins who came to the house to withdraw in “their own barbaric language” (συμβαρβαρίζων), for he, “having exchanged [the clothes of] a merchant with [those of] a soldier” (τὸν ἔμπορον εἰς στρατιώτην μεταμειψάμενος), pretended to have claimed the building for himself.<sup>112</sup>

Choniates recounts that it was Dominikos who saved him and his family from captivity and rape: “This worthy [man], formerly our servant and client, but now our ally and defender in the decisive time, led us to another house which harbored Venetians who were familiar to us.” The family pretended to be their friend’s prisoners, but soon had to leave this house, too, because the quarter where it was located was assigned to crusaders.<sup>113</sup> What happened to Dominikos and other acquaintances is not revealed, but the story clearly indicates to a remarkable degree the familiarity and friendship between at least some Venetian residents of Constantinople and Byzantines. When elaborately emphasizing the difference between Byzantines and Latins in his account of the Sicilian conquest of Thessalonike, Choniates indicates that what he says is to be understood in context and that, at least in the capital, many—including himself—lived side by side with Latins: “Between us and them there is a vast gulf of difference, our ways of thinking have nothing in common and we are a thousand miles apart, although we have physical contact and often it so happens that we share the same residence.”<sup>114</sup>

Choniates’s account of his Venetian connections is in line not only with indications elsewhere in his history, but also with Kinnamos.<sup>115</sup> The story of Dominikos and Choniates’s other acquaintances is all the more remarkable because it took place after the Latin conquest in April 1204, which means that the Venetians in question maintained a sense of solidarity and duty to the Choniates family, and most likely to other Byzantines, despite the turbulent

110 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 588(13–14 LO).

111 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 293, n. 27 (p. 578).

112 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 587(1)–588(20).

113 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 588(20–33); see, p. 588(27–29): “Τοῦ χρηστοῦ τοίνυν ἐκείνου καὶ πρώην μὲν οἰκότριβός τε καὶ πρόσφυγος, τότε δ’ ἀγαθοῦ συνεργάτου κἀν τοῖς καιρίοις ὑπερασπίζοντος ἐς ἄλλην οἰκίαν ἡγησαμένου, γνωστοῦς ἡμῖν Βενετίκους τρέφουσαν.”

114 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 301(27–29): “οὕτω μέσον ἡμῶν καὶ αὐτῶν χάσμα διαφορᾶς ἐστήρικται μέγιστον

καὶ ταῖς γνώμαις ἀσυναφεῖς ἔσμεν καὶ κατὰ διάμετρον ἀφεστήκαμεν, εἰ καὶ σώμασι συναπτόμεθα καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν πολλᾶκις κληρούμεθα οἴκησιν.”

115 See above, pp. 91–93.

events of 1203/4.<sup>116</sup> Although twelfth-century literati, when writing about Venetians, employed the ancient *topoi* of the vile tendencies of merchants, it is nevertheless clear that they could befriend and do business with them.<sup>117</sup> Thus the portrayal of Venetians is characteristically ambivalent, and negative characterizations should not be separated from their literary context.<sup>118</sup>

Also of interest is the casual statement (albeit only appearing in the a-version of the *Historia*) that the patriarch Dositheos was of Venetian origin, which may have something to do with the Venetian conquest of 1204.<sup>119</sup> His father is said to have been a certain Βιτικλίνος, Viticlinus being a common Venetian name.<sup>120</sup> Although Choniates sharply criticizes Dositheos's strongly contested transfer from the patriarchal throne of Jerusalem to that of Constantinople,<sup>121</sup> condemning his nefarious character and influence on Isaakios II, he never attacks the patriarch's origin. Here, too, is support for the hypothesis that people of non-Byzantine origins who conformed to the norms of the society to which they had relocated were generally neither attacked nor disadvantaged solely due to their origin.<sup>122</sup>

Dositheos's Venetian origin and his connections with the republic appear to have been significant in several ways, especially during the Third Crusade. Magdalino appropriately observes that Dositheos plausibly pursued Venetian interests and that the height of his influence on Isaakios coincided with particularly productive Byzantine-Venetian relations expressed in the chrysobulls of 1187 and 1189, increasing Venetian investment in Byzantine trade in the late 1180s and early 1190s, and Venice's reluctance to support the Third Crusade. All this gives rise to the question of whether the patriarch's opposition to the Third Crusade was motivated by an "anti-Latin" attitude or rather by political considerations regarding Venice and the Holy Land. It is also a possibility that Dositheos was chosen as patriarch of Jerusalem because of his Venetian connections.<sup>123</sup>

116 As noted by Neocleous (2013b), p. 246, there is no evidence that the Venetians who resided in Constantinople supported those who besieged the city in the summer of 1203 or during the final siege. On the remarkable solidity of the ties between Byzantine citizens and Venetian residents who remained in the city until after its fall, see *ibid.*, p. 249.

117 Neocleous (2013b), p. 225.

118 See also Mitsiou (2015), p. 72.

119 Magdalino (2009b), p. 66.

120 Magdalino (2007b), p. 100. A note on episcopal transfers confirms that Dositheos was λατινογενής (see *ibid.*).

121 On this issue, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 431, n. 70 (p. 740), and p. 433, n. 81 (pp. 742–743).

122 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 405(14)–408(86).

123 Magdalino (2007b).

In Eustathios's commentary on the Pentecostal hymn by Ioannes of Damascus, the Venetian polity remarkably receives praise. This work was probably composed after the restoration of the alliance between Venice and Romania under Isaakios (February 1187)<sup>124</sup> and thus adopts a different tone to that of Eustathios's imperial orations of the 1170s, when Romania was at war with the Serenissima.<sup>125</sup> Venice is applauded as an embodiment of a mixed political order: the doge (δοῦξ) represents the monarchical element, the elected "consuls" (κονσοῦλοι) the aristocratic element, and the other officials the popular element (δημοτικόν). This is an example of the open-mindedness towards non-Byzantine peoples that Eustathios sometimes displays in his writings, even if he frequently maintains the dichotomy between barbarians—not only non-Byzantines, but also the uneducated masses of Romania—and superior cultivated Byzantines such as himself. Although Eustathios acknowledges the basic equality of men, he regards *paideia* as a higher ideal and one of the greatest achievements of humanity. His praise of non-Byzantines, like that of Choniates, may have been intended as a means of criticizing fellow *Rōmaioi*.<sup>126</sup> The praise of the "Enetoi, now, however, Ounetoi or Benetoi" (Ἐνετοὶ νῦν δὲ Οὐνετοὶ εἴτ' οὖν Βένετοὶ)<sup>127</sup> and their polity may, in accordance with Eustathios's discussion of imperial power and his censure of various tendencies of his own society, be interpreted as a veiled criticism of the political organization of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>128</sup>

A possible allusion to Venetians in Eustathios's account of the capture of Thessalonike by the Sicilians is less flattering. He relates that the city fell

124 Cesaretti (1988), p. 226.

125 See above, pp. 91–96.

126 See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 159–160, who indicates that Eustathios's praise of the Venetian political order implies that no Byzantine city has anything like it. Magdalino also brings up a comparable passage in a work by Michael Choniates: he criticizes the people of Euripos for disregarding their bishop, to which he adds that "Romans" could learn a great deal from Latins about appropriate behavior at public assemblies. As Magdalino also notes, however, such reflections appear to have been of a rather theoretical, intellectual nature, because putting anything like a communal government into practice would have most likely diminished episcopal as well as imperial authority.

According to Messis (2012), pp. 155–156, Eustathios implies that literati of his rank, i.e., a kind of intellectual aristocracy, ought to have more influence on the emperor.

127 This designation of the Venetians is indicative of another tendency of Eustathios, which is to display his erudition by distinguishing the expressions of the learned language in which he writes from the common language of his own time: see Cesaretti (1988), pp. 226–227.

128 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Commentary on the Pentecostal Hymn by Ioannes of Damascus, § 210, pp. 351–352. See Cesaretti (1988); Browning (1995), p. 89.



because of treason and that he cannot say precisely who the traitor was, but that it was most likely to be someone of non-Byzantine or provincial origin—depending on the interpretation of the word ἐθνικός used in the archbishop's account. He goes on to relate that a Latin, whom he describes as a credible source, told him that someone treacherously communicated with the besiegers from the tower in the district of the *bourgesioi*—that is, those residents of Latin origin who had obtained the status of citizens.<sup>129</sup> Perhaps they had reason to believe that they would be richly rewarded. In any case, it is probable that Venetians had returned to Thessalonike by 1185, because Emperor Andronikos was interested in functional relations with them.<sup>130</sup>

## 2 Πισσαίοι (Pisans) and Γενουίται (Genoese) in Venice's Shadow

### 2.1 *A Very Generic Portrayal of Their Ascendancy and Integration*

In keeping with their weaker presence in Constantinople and in the Byzantine Empire generally during the 1100s,<sup>131</sup> Genoese and Pisans figure less prominently than Venetians in historical works, although their commercial and political relevance in the Mediterranean world was increasing considerably during that time.<sup>132</sup> The degree of direct involvement in Byzantine affairs determined to a large extent the attention devoted to Latins. Historical works and orations rarely refer to Pisans and Genoese as such, possibly for that reason. In Eustathios's and Choniates's descriptions of the massacre in Constantinople in 1182, for example, they are simply referred to as Latins, even though they were probably the main victims. Pisans and Genoese appear initially as enemies and intruders in the histories. Only later, when they had concluded agreements with emperors, did this depiction change, and this is only apparent in the later historical works of Kinnamos, Choniates, and Eustathios.

In the context of Alexios I's efforts to secure his rule against enemies from within and outside the empire, Anna mentions that her father had to deal with leaders from Genoa, Pisa, and Longibardia who intended to plunder the coasts of the empire.<sup>133</sup> This brief passage refers to the time during which Alexios

129 See above, p. 92.

130 See above, p. 98. On the Venetian presence in Thessalonike, see Lilie (1984a), pp. 213–216.

131 See the clear assessment of Lilie (1984a), esp. pp. 103–115.

132 On Pisa and Genoa in the long twelfth century and their relations with Romania, see Brand (1968); Balard (1978); Lilie (1984a); Day (1988); Favreau-Lilie (1989); Origone (1997, 2019); and Penna (2012).

133 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIV.3.1–4 (reference to Pisa and Genoa on p. 434[28–31]). On this passage, see also Lilie (1984a), p. 623.

concluded a formal agreement with Pisa (1111).<sup>134</sup> According to Lilie, it is conceivable that the Pisans involved in the preparation of the attack were not acting in agreement with their mother city because both the central governments in Pisa and Genoa could exercise only limited control over their subjects in the twelfth century. However, their attitudes concerning piratic activities of their citizens may have been ambivalent. Another possibility is that the Pisan attackers had the approval of their government, which intended to obtain more favorable terms from Alexios through forceful means.<sup>135</sup>

Anna's mention of a planned Frankish attack with Pisan involvement needs to be viewed in the context of a major theme of the *Alexiad* and other Greek works of the long twelfth century, namely the encirclement and endangerment of Byzantium by barbarian enemies.<sup>136</sup> Anna's goal in this situation was to display Alexios as a hero, who, according to her, took such effective defensive measures that the Franks were frightened into refraining from an attack altogether.<sup>137</sup>

Anna most extensively refers to Pisans when describing their attack in the year 1099 that occurred on their way to the Holy Land. This amounts to another hostile incursion in which the valiant, resourceful, and Odysseus-like Alexios protects the empire from "barbarian" intruders, in this instance at sea. That Anna alleges a Pisan collusion with Bohemond, said to have gladly concurred,<sup>138</sup> serves to reinforce this intention.<sup>139</sup> To further stress Alexios's victory and tactical achievement, the Pisans are praised as skilled seamen.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, the number of their ships is said to have amounted to close to 900, a vast exaggeration.<sup>141</sup> It is in line with the generic trend of the portrayal of the "other" in Byzantine literature<sup>142</sup> that none of the Latins or Pisans, including their leader archbishop Daimbert, simply referred to as "bishop of Pisa" (ἐπίσκοπος Πίσσης), are mentioned by name. In contrast, several of Alexios's fleet commanders are named: Tatikios,<sup>143</sup> the *meγas doux* Landoulphos (of Frankish origin);<sup>144</sup> Eumathios Philokales, *doux* of Cyprus;<sup>145</sup> Eleemon;

134 Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1255, p. 174; Penna (2012), pp. 101–114.

135 Lilie (1984a), pp. 361–362; Favreau-Lilie (2013), esp. pp. 285–286.

136 E.g., the ALEXIAN KOMNENIAN MUSES, on which see Ch. 1, p. 61.

137 See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIV.3.1–6, pp. 434(28)–437(5).

138 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.10.6, p. 352(63–74).

139 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.10.5–6, pp. 351(56)–352(74). See also Lilie (1993b), p. 63.

140 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.10.2, p. 350(9–10).

141 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.10.1, p. 350(2–3). By contrast, the Pisan Annals only speak of 120 vessels. See Lilie (1984a), p. 339.

142 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

143 Skoulatos (1980), no. 195, pp. 287–292.

144 Skoulatos (1980), no. 110, pp. 169–172; also Ch. 7, p. 223.

145 On him, see Skoulatos (1980), no. 54, pp. 79–82.

and Perichytes. The latter two are so obscure as to be only known from the *Alexiad*.<sup>146</sup> Their reported achievements are intended to reflect flatteringly on Alexios and are most likely hyperbolic.<sup>147</sup>

The passage is followed by an account of a Genoese attack, which also occurred on the way to the Holy Land: Genoese are portrayed much as are the Pisans, and for similar reasons. They are said to have held hidden hostile intentions against the empire, recognized by the prudent Alexios who thus anticipated the attack. Their fleet is called “mighty” (πολύς).<sup>148</sup> The passage, which conflicts with reliable evidence,<sup>149</sup> is not meant to inform about Genoese interactions with the Byzantines under Alexios, but rather to display the *Alexiad*'s hero as an effective naval defender. It also is set within the broader narrative of Alexios's struggle against Bohemond, who vied with the Byzantines for control of Laodikeia.

In the histories of Kinnamos and Choniates, the Genoese mainly appear as residents in Byzantium (above all, in Constantinople), diplomats, and, on one occasion, troublemakers brawling with Venetians. The same is true for Pisans in the *Historia*; Kinnamos does name them, while he mentions Genoese only once, albeit by the name of “Lombards” (Λαμπάρδοι).<sup>150</sup> A few remarks made by Choniates point to a considerable degree of familiarity between Byzantine aristocrats such as himself and Italians in the capital. Unlike Kinnamos, Choniates was not writing a few years after the ousting of the Venetians, but at the high point of Genoese and Pisan piracy in the Aegean and after the restoration of Venice's position. His first reference to them is within a discussion of Manouel I's general Western and Italian policies at the beginning of Book VII.<sup>151</sup> According to this passage, the Genoese were provided with a quarter in the capital and Manouel attempted to win them over with gifts of money in the fight against Barbarossa, which is an indirect reference to the negotiations with the Genoese in 1155, and the privileges of 1169 and 1170.<sup>152</sup> Western sources indicate good relations between Byzantium and Genoa during Manouel's last years. This is echoed by the honorable reference in Eustathios of Thessalonike's

146 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch (2001), p. 392, n. 165, p. 393, n. 166.

147 Lilie (1984a), pp. 619–620; (1993b), p. 62, supposes that the historical event behind Anna's narrative was a minor skirmish with a Byzantine squadron.

148 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.11.2, p. 354(42).

149 See Lilie (1984a), pp. 620–621.

150 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 282(8, 10).

151 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 199(58–60).

152 Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1402, pp. 224–225, no. 1488, pp. 255–256, no. 1497, pp. 258–259, no. 1498, p. 259, no. 1499, pp. 259–260; Penna (2012), pp. 115–118, 133–156.

oration on the occasion of the arrival of Agnes of France, transported by a Genoese ship to the Byzantine capital.<sup>153</sup>

Pisans and Genoese played a special role in the volatile political climate after the death of Manouel I in September 1180, but they are referred to generically as Latins in the sections of the histories that concern the relatively short phase between the accession of Alexios II (September 1180) and Andronikos Komnenos's assumption of the regency (April/May 1182). The political vacuum left by the passing of Manouel could not be filled by his infant son or by his widow, the dowager empress Maria-Xene, who openly favored a relative of her deceased husband over all others: the *prōtosebastos* Alexios Komnenos. His attempt to exercise power without sufficient consideration of other aristocrats provoked hostility from those who felt excluded.<sup>154</sup> Political strife inevitably resulted, which became manifest in a first unsuccessful conspiracy against the *prōtosebastos*. Influential members of the Komnenian aristocracy continued to scheme against him.<sup>155</sup> In this delicate situation, the *prōtosebastos* not only tried to win the support of some aristocrats by means of gifts and other favors<sup>156</sup> but also sought political allies from outside the Byzantine aristocracy. He therefore reached out to the Italian maritime powers and seems to have maintained Manouel's well-disposed policy toward them. It is likely that he became an even more generous supporter during the later months of his regency, when he realized how much he needed their assistance against his opponents in the aristocracy and the populace of the capital.<sup>157</sup>

The claim in the literature that the populace held long-standing hostile attitudes toward the Italians or Latins more generally is tenuous. The people of Constantinople would express their opinions and attitudes in public displays throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Mockery, abuse, and outbursts were directed against everyone: not just Latins, but often emperors, members of the imperial family, officials, or various Byzantines and non-Byzantine

153 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 254(38–41); see also Ch. 3, p. 169, n. 146.

154 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 223–226(63), 229(67)–230(85); EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 18(13)–20(4).

155 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 231(20)–232(31); EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 20(4)–22(23).

156 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 244(64–69).

157 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 247(31–34); EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(5–7); Cognasso (1912), p. 227; Lilie (1984a), pp. 535, 537. He also seems to have supported the great landowners and tried to win favor with monks and monasteries, which can be deduced from an act of July 1181. Apparently, this did not contribute as much to his popularity as he might have hoped: see Brand (1968), pp. 32–33; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1550.

groups. This evidence of widespread animosity does not sit very well with the tenuous hypothesis of a specific “Latinophobia” among the lower strata of the Constantinopolitans.<sup>158</sup> As with Venetians, resentment toward some Pisans or Genoese is plausible,<sup>159</sup> but there is no evidence that it was more pronounced than that directed at other groups. Latin residents of Constantinople had every reason to support the regent after the *prōtosebastos*’s opponents, seeking to bring him down, began to spread propaganda against them, making the prospect of a change of regime unattractive at best.<sup>160</sup>

Initially, the *καισάρισα* Maria, Manouel’s only surviving daughter, and her husband, the *kaisar* Ioannes (Renier of Montferrat), were perhaps the most influential antagonists of the *prōtosebastos*—the fact that they were a princess whose mother and grandmother were of German and Hungarian origin and a Latin respectively underlines the problematic nature of the hypothesis that the conflicts after Manouel’s death were between a “pro-Latin” and “anti-Latin” faction. To protect themselves against the *prōtosebastos*, the couple sought sanctuary in Hagia Sophia, where, to his dismay, they were given shelter by the patriarch Theodosios.<sup>161</sup> Theodosios had previously maintained support for the *kaisar* and the *kaisarissa* (*καίσαρες*), even during the armed conflict over the control of the Great Church.<sup>162</sup> In this “Holy War,” during which the *kaisares* defended themselves from imperial troops with Hagia Sophia as their base, they enjoyed considerable popular support. The populace of the city, a major political factor during that crisis, became emboldened and plundered the houses of aristocratic favorites of the regents—an event that can be regarded as a prelude to the so-called Latin massacre of the following year and which also shows that the populace did not only target Latins.<sup>163</sup> During this

158 Cf. Garland (1992), esp. pp. 34–38. For this alleged “Latinophobia” of the populace, cf. also Simpson (1999); Angold (2015), pp. 133–134. Maleczek (2013), pp. 113–114, even takes a general hatred of Latins as a given and identifies it as the reason for Conrad of Montferrat’s departure from Romania to the Holy Land in 1187 (see Ch. 4, pp. 175, 179).

159 An indication of this is a provision in an imperial privilege for Genoa issued in 1170 which forbade the Genoese from taking up arms with bad intentions against anyone. According to Penna (2012), p. 152, this suggests that “conflicts between the Genoese (or perhaps other Italians) and subjects of [Emperor Manouel’s] empire had already occurred.” See also *ibid.*, pp. 103–107, 139–141, for provisions in the privilege for Pisa of 1111 and the privilege for Genoa of 1169, and pp. 241–242 for the possibility that the plundering of shipwrecks was addressed in 1111, 1169, and 1170 because of previous problems.

160 Brand (1968), pp. 33–34.

161 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 22(23)–24(14); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 232(32–37).

162 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 24(15)–26(9); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 241(88)–242(94).

163 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 235(12–21).

armed confrontation, Eustathios claims, the troops of the regents committed atrocities which drew the ire of the populace.<sup>164</sup>

Moreover, from the accounts of Eustathios and Choniates, it is apparent that Latin troops fought on both sides in this struggle. Neither historian particularly emphasizes this fact, also reported by Latin sources,<sup>165</sup> because it was commonplace to employ Western mercenaries in Byzantium. This highlights that referring to factions in the political struggles after the death of Manouel in terms of “pro-Latin” and “anti-Latin” is questionable at best and anachronistic at worst. Latins became involved in a political struggle which was not about them but about winning control over the regency. The *kaisarissa* hired, among other soldiers, “Italians fighting with heavy arms” (Ἰταλιῶται ὀπλομάχοι) to defend the Great Church.<sup>166</sup> They might have been from Montferrat, like her husband. Choniates also notes that the *kaisar* had a Latin bodyguard (Λατινικὸν δορυφορικόν),<sup>167</sup> perhaps identical with the heavily armed Italians. Eustathios mentions in his pre-narrative to the massacre that “Latins,” perhaps consisting mostly of Genoese and Pisans, had been recruited for the “Holy War,” but had not fought due to the conflict’s short duration.<sup>168</sup>

The unspecific nature of these references is not just due to the employment of Westerners in Byzantine armies being commonplace but is yet another indication of the largely generic description of the “other” in middle Byzantine literature, strongly supporting the hypothesis of a major gap between the involvement of Latins in Byzantine society and politics and their comparatively sparse literary representation.

As the troops of the regents gained the upper hand, despite heavy losses, many among the populace and aristocracy placed their hope in Andronikos Komnenos removing the *prōtosebastos* from power—nothing indicates that Andronikos was the head of an “anti-Latin” faction. The commoners saw him as a savior, and deemed him able to miraculously improve their lot, as related by both Eustathios and Choniates.<sup>169</sup> The victory of the regents, however, did them no good. Under political pressure, the patriarch had to be reinstated after

164 For the description of the events of the “Holy War,” see EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 26(9–21, 31–33), 28(17–22); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 232(37)–241(87).

165 Brand (1968), p. 37.

166 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 233(64).

167 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 238(94).

168 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(5–7).

169 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 26(21)–28(22); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 246(15–19), 248(62–75). On Andronikos’s previous banishment to Pontos, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 226(75)–227(16).

a few months of banishment.<sup>170</sup> Andronikos, who had made contact with key political figures in the capital and was also informed by his daughter, criticized the regime of the regents, posed as protector of the young emperor as obligated by his oath to Manuel and then decided to intervene more strongly, spreading propaganda against Maria-Xene, the *prōtosebastos*, and their supporters, who notably included Pisans, Genoese, and other Latins. He then marched to Chalcedon under the pretext of protecting the young emperor.<sup>171</sup> He had been encouraged by influential aristocrats—notably the *kaisarissa* Maria—to remove the *prōtosebastos*. The *kaisarissa* later escaped from the capital and joined Andronikos. His namesake Andronikos Angelos and his sons, among them the future emperors Isaakios and Alexios, likewise went over to him.<sup>172</sup>

In the final confrontation between the *prōtosebastos* and the usurper Andronikos Komnenos, the former's Latin allies stood ready to defend the city, supporting his fleet. The *prōtosebastos* was unable to raise an army against Andronikos, so the fleet and his Latin allies were his only hope:

Therefore triremes [archaising term for ships in general] covered the Propontis; in some, the oarsmen and those who were supposed to fight from their decks were Romans, in others, however, there was the strongest and most valiant part of the Latins of various origins who resided in Constantinople, to whom money flowed like water, as the *prōtosebastos*, who was in need of assistance, had more confidence in theirs than that of the Romans themselves.<sup>173</sup>

Choniates speaks of Latins of various origins, but from Western sources it can be deduced that they were most likely Genoese and Pisans for the most part. After the expulsion of the Venetians, Pisa and Genoa were the strongest maritime

170 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 241(88)–242(19).

171 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 28(23)–32(27); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 227(17)–229(66). For his propaganda in the capital, a contributing factor to the massacre, see below.

172 Andronikos Angelos had previously suffered a defeat against his Komnenian namesake, perhaps on purpose, as he, too, probably intended to bring the *prōtosebastos* down. Alternatively, the defeat was due to the morale of the troops and he later opted to throw in his lot with Andronikos: see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 230(86)–231(19), 243(32)–244(47), 245(80)–246(6).

173 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 247(31–34): “Τριήρεις τοίνυν τὴν Προποντίδα ἐκάλυπτον, αἱ μὲν Ῥωμαῖους ἔχουσαι τοὺς ἐρέσσοντας καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τῶν καταστροφμάτων διαμάχεσθαι μέλλοντας, αἱ δὲ τῶν κατὰ πόλιν διαφορογενῶν Λατίνων ὅτιπερ κρᾶτιστον μέρος καὶ μαχημῶτατον, οἷς καὶ τὰ χρήματα ποταμῆδὸν ἐπεχέοντο, ἐπεὶ καὶ τούτοις ἐπεποιθεῖ μάλλον ὁ χρώμενος πρωτοσεβαστὸς ἤπερ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις αὐτοῖς ὡς ἀρήξουσιν.”

powers in Romania apart from the Byzantine navy itself.<sup>174</sup> The admiral (μέγας δούξ) Kontostephanos, however, had enough political leverage to force the *prōtosebastos* to entrust the command to him, and a few days later he went over to Andronikos with the ships under Byzantine control while being observed by men of the *prōtosebastos*, who were unable to stop him.<sup>175</sup> The *prōtosebastos* was then arrested by his own guard as his regime crumbled.<sup>176</sup> Andronikos now sent his troops into the city.

Choniates makes the comment that the *prōtosebastos* would have been able to gain the upper hand with the help of his Latin supporters, had he not been exceedingly soft and effeminate:<sup>177</sup>

He would have barred access to the city to Andronikos, he would have prevented his downfall. After all, he could do with the imperial treasury as he pleased, he also could employ the triremes [ships] which held the soldiery composed of Latins for subduing his adversary, as it [the Latin soldiery] was clearly superior to the Roman fleet, and also bristling with weapons and delighting in blood. But [his] destiny stood in his way, as it seems, his will became weaker, while Andronikos strengthened his, tripped up his rival's heels and won a splendid victory.<sup>178</sup>

Lilie has argued in relation to this comment that a Latin victory was doubtful, and, regardless, the *prōtosebastos* was doomed, his position in Constantinople after the defection of Kontostephanos being weak enough that he was arrested by his own guard.<sup>179</sup> Choniates may have been influenced by Andronikos's propaganda against the Latins in Constantinople, at least those who supported the *prōtosebastos*, which made them appear more dangerous than they were. Furthermore, the image of the decadent and effeminate *prōtosebastos* ruling in

174 Brand (1968), p. 41.

175 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 247(34–41), 248(59–63).

176 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 248(76)–250(10).

177 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 250(9–13).

178 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 250(13–20): “τῷ τε Ἀνδρονίκῳ τὴν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀπόδοον ἀποκλείσας καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἀπείρατον διαφυλάξας τοῦ τότε κακοῦ· ποιεῖν γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῖς βασιλείοις ἡδύνατο θησαυροῖς ὅποσα ἠβούλετο καὶ ταῖς τριήρεσιν ἐνὴν χρῆσασθαι πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀνθισταμένου καταπολέμησιν, αἱ τὸ ἐκ Λατίνων εἶχον ὀπλιτικόν, οὕτω μὲν ἐπικρατέστερον ὄν τοῦ Ῥωμαϊκοῦ ναυτικοῦ, οὕτω δὲ πάγχαλκον καὶ ἄλλων ἀίμοχαρές, ἀλλὰ τοῦ μορσίμου, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἀντικρούσαντος, ὁ μὲν τὸ πρόθυμον ὑπεχάλασεν, Ἀνδρόνικος δ' ἐπιτείνας ὑπεσκέλισε τουτοῖ ἀντιτρέχοντα καὶ τὴν νίκην λαμπρὰν ἀπηνέγκαστο.”

179 Brand (1968), pp. 40–41; Lilie (1984a), p. 539.



the name of a spoiled boy emperor reinforces the narrative of imperial decline that characterizes the *Historia*, especially for the years after 1180.

The next direct reference to Genoese and Pisans, the Gafforio episode, occurs in the account of the reign of Alexios III (1195–1203) and is part of Choniates's narrative of imperial decline, but also points to good relations between Alexios and Pisa, at least until Pisans assisted in the escape of his nephew (the future Alexios IV).<sup>180</sup> During that time, Choniates narrates, a Genoese pirate named Gafforio was active in the Aegean. In order to counter him, Alexios III, under whom the Byzantine naval forces were weak,<sup>181</sup> employed a certain Ioannes Steiriones, perhaps a native of Calabria, although Choniates's designation is not without doubt.<sup>182</sup> Steiriones commanded a fleet of Pisans in imperial service. However, he had himself been a pirate of the worst sort according to Choniates, before he shifted his allegiance to the Byzantines in exchange for considerable financial benefit.<sup>183</sup> The *Historia* makes the degree of imperial decline plain: the Byzantine *basileus* employed a dishonorable and greedy pirate to combat other pirates in the vicinity of Constantinople. Seeking plausible causes of this dire situation, Choniates identifies the reforms of Ioannes II as a major contributing factor in the decline of the Byzantine navy. These reforms may indeed have compromised Byzantium's naval defenses, but, due to his agenda, Choniates exaggerated their relevance.<sup>184</sup> Choniates also mentions that Alexios had dispatched Gafforio's Genoese friends to negotiate a peace agreement.<sup>185</sup>

It was "a certain Pisan" who helped Alexios Angelos, the emperor's nephew and son of the deposed Isaakios II, to escape in the autumn of 1201.<sup>186</sup> The full story is not known, but Alexios's sister, Queen Eirene of Germany, was probably involved and in contact with the Pisan who arranged it.<sup>187</sup> At any rate, the escape of a political rival to another court, though condemned by Choniates,

180 Brand (1968), pp. 214–221; Lilie (1984a), p. 585.

181 Lilie (1984a), p. 633.

182 On this point, see Zorzi (2012), p. 154.

183 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 481(95)–483(34).

184 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 55(5)–56(24); Lilie (1984a), pp. 626–627.

185 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 482(22).

186 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 536(30). See Brand (1968), p. 133, 215–216, 275–276; Lilie (1984a), p. 585.

187 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 536(12–28), where he recounts that the confinement of the deposed emperor Isaakios was relatively mild and that he could communicate with the outside world, notably with certain Latins and his daughter Eirene. See also Angold (2003), p. 40.

had ample precedent in Byzantium, and does not seem to have had anything specifically to do with Pisans.<sup>188</sup>

When discussing the causes of the fall of Constantinople, Choniates criticizes his own fellow Byzantines and emperors arguably more harshly than the Latin conquerors, who remain culturally inferior “barbarians,” thereby emphasizing the magnitude of the Byzantine failure. In the logic of the *Historia*, the success of the Latins can only be explained by shortcomings on the part of the Byzantines, who would have prevailed under normal circumstances due to a fundamental superiority. The Angeloi, and especially Alexios, are harshly criticized for mistreating not only their Byzantine subjects but also “those [who came] from the Latin peoples.”<sup>189</sup> For example, Alexios encouraged Pisans in Byzantium to attack their Venetian competitors. They fought frequently on land and at sea according to Choniates, who blames Alexios rather than the Pisans, implying that the emperor contributed to disorder in his realm.<sup>190</sup> Likewise, his condemnation of Latin pirates is balanced by his criticism of arbitrary confiscations of Italian property in the provinces,<sup>191</sup> the plundering of shipwrecks,<sup>192</sup> and the imperial attempts to play Italian maritime republics off against each other.

A sympathy for and proximity with Pisans is apparent in his description of the battles with the crusaders before Alexios III left Constantinople, in which they demonstrated their bravery when they collaborated with the Varangians in fighting off heavily armed Frankish troops who had broken through.<sup>193</sup> Perhaps by stressing the bravery of Western mercenaries and allies he intended to shame his fellow Byzantines and motivate them to more consistently resist the conquerors. The episode shows that the Pisans initially kept faith with Alexios III and changed sides only after they were attacked by the populace,

188 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 529(25–31); Angold (2003), pp. 40–41.

189 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 537(55–58).

190 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 537(58)–538(71). For Choniates’s criticism of Alexios III’s mistreatment of the Venetians in the empire, see above.

191 Lilie (1984a), pp. 302–303, 308.

192 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 326(50)–329(49). The problem, if it was as pervasive as claimed in this passage, must have affected Italians a great deal. According to Choniates, the situation substantially improved under Andronikos, but the improvement likely did not last, as noted by Lilie (1984a), p. 303. On the corresponding legislation in Byzantium, see Penna (2012), pp. 241–253.

193 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 545(37–38): “[The Latins] were quite bravely repulsed by the Roman allies, the Pisans and the ax-bearing barbarians, and most of them were wounded when they returned” (πρὸς τῶν ἐπικούρων Ῥωμαίοις Πισσαίων καὶ τῶν πελεκυφόρων βαρβάρων ἀπεκρούσθησαν γενναιότερον καὶ τραυματῖαι οἱ πλείους ἐπανέλυσαν).

knowing that increased Venetian influence in Constantinople would be unfavorable to them.<sup>194</sup>

## 2.2 “Anti-Latin”? *The Accounts of the So-Called Latin Massacre in 1182*

The so-called Latin massacre, which occurred in the Byzantine capital in April 1182, was a very significant occurrence in the relations with the West in the late twelfth century, and greatly impacted the empire. It is referred to by Choniates and Eustathios, but is also touched upon in the literary work of Choniates’s brother Michael. Numerous Latin sources also recount the event, most notably William of Tyre.<sup>195</sup>

Eustathios’s account of the event differs greatly from that of Choniates, mentioning several details that the younger literatus omits. Eustathios’s account begins with Andronikos ordering his Paphlagonians, “barbarians among the Hellenes,” to target the Latins.<sup>196</sup> Choniates and Western sources attribute responsibility for the massacre to Andronikos. If he did not give the command to assault the Latins, it is likely that he consciously allowed the massacre to happen, to his (short-term) political advantage.<sup>197</sup> A digression on Latin residents in Eustathios’s history mentions an old custom according to which they lived separately (ἀφωρισμένοι) from the Byzantines on the coast of the Golden Horn.<sup>198</sup> There is no indication of who these Latins were, but elsewhere in his narrative he addresses all those who were harmed by Andronikos, Westerners being one of the main groups. Eustathios states that they were “numerous, diverse, spoke many different languages, hailed from here and there.” Significantly, he names people from Pisa and Genoa first.<sup>199</sup>

194 See Brand (1968), p. 217; and Lilie (1984a), p. 586: “Wenngleich sie [the Pisans] infolge dieser Handlungsweise [going over to the Venetians] ihren Besitz retten und das Weiterbestehen ihres Quartiers ermöglichen konnten, so war ihre politische Rolle in der Romania für die nächsten Jahre doch ausgespielt.”

195 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., pp. 32(29)–36(5); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., pp. 250(21)–251(44); MICHAEL CHONIATES, Works, vol. 1, p. 163–164. For the Latin sources, see the detailed discussion in Neocleous (2012b).

196 On Andronikos’s troops, see Brand (1968), p. 39 (incl. n. 20); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 69, n. 194 (p. 590).

197 See, for example, Brand (1968), p. 41; Lilie (1984a), pp. 541–543; Nicol (1988), p. 107; Cheynet (1990), p. 429; Garland (1997), p. 293.

198 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., p. 34(1).

199 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., p. 56(11–14); see p. 56(11–12): “οἱ πολλοί, οἱ ποικίλοι, οἱ πολύγλωσσοι, διασπαρέντες ἄλλοι ἄλλοθεν.” By φρήτρη, Eustathios might be referring to certain Pisan and Genoese trade associations: see EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., trans. Hunger, p. 62.

Byzantine historians offer no description of the quarters in the city but rather interesting insights into the practice of the cohabitation of Italians and Byzantines. Evidence on the structure of the Italian quarters can be found elsewhere: they included churches, wharves, cemeteries, warehouses, shops, and other buildings. It is probable that Latin churches, differing architecturally from Byzantine churches, were especially targeted, as Eustathios suggests.<sup>200</sup> Although the Italian residents may have been legally restricted to the quarters assigned to them, in practice this restriction seems not to have been observed. Sources demonstrate that Byzantines lived in the Italian quarters and that Italians lived outside the quarters.<sup>201</sup> In some passages, Choniates and Kinnamos describe the practice of the intermingling of Latins and Byzantines in Constantinople.<sup>202</sup> Eustathios's buying into a rumor of a Latin conspiracy may be responsible for the high number of Latins he claims dwelt in the capital in 1182: over 60,000.<sup>203</sup> This figure is certainly far in excess of the actual one—the total number of inhabitants of the capital can hardly have exceeded 200,000 in the twelfth century.<sup>204</sup> His figure should therefore not be taken literally, but it strengthens the archbishop's allegation that it was their goal to take over the city.

Eustathios not only indicates that such an extreme rumor was apparently necessary to stir up the populace sufficiently against Latin residents, but he also introspectively identifies causes of divine displeasure and the disastrous fall of his see into Sicilian hands, portraying the massacre as a factor contributing to Thessalonike's capture and deeming it worthy of divine retribution.<sup>205</sup>

200 On the Italian quarters, see Brand (1968), p. 218; Schreiner (1979); Magdalino (2000b), pp. 222–226; Penna (2012), pp. 204–230. For Eustathios's remarks about the targeting of the Latin clergy and the desecration of holy places, see below.

201 Brand (1968), pp. 2, 18; Lilie (1984a), pp. 298–300; Jacoby (2000), pp. 135–137; Magdalino (2000b), p. 225; Neocleous (2013b), p. 228.

202 Neocleous (2013b), pp. 226–229. See also above, pp. 91–92, 94–95, 99–101.

203 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., p. 34(2).

204 On Eustathios's exaggerated figure, see Jacoby (1961), p. 107 (incl. n. 2); Lilie (1984a), pp. 290–302; NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 69, n. 194 (p. 590). For estimates of the capital's population at the time, see Jacoby (1961); Koder (2002b), p. 110; and Neocleous (2013b), pp. 231–232.

205 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., p. 34(16–20): “They attacked the Latins, who were not expecting this, with the most terrible results. And in so doing they sowed the seeds from which we, and many others with us, have reaped sheaves, so to speak, from the meadow of Persephone. For it is from this action that our present woes came upon us” (ἐπέρχονται τοῖς Λατίνοις οὐκ ἂν ἐλπίζουσι καὶ διατίθενται τὰ ἐλεεινότετα καὶ σπέρματα ἐκεῖνα προκαταβάλλονται, ἀφ’ ὧν ἡμεῖς καὶ πολλοὶ ἕτεροι σὺν ἡμῖν τεθερίκαμεν λειμώνος Περσεφῶνης, οὕτω φάναι, δράγματα. Ἐκείθεν γὰρ ἡμῖν καθήκει τὰ παρόντα κακά). See the second section of Ch. 9 for the motivations of Eustathios's account of the conquest of Thessalonike.

Even so, he presents the said rumor spread by Andronikos and his followers as the truth. According to this rumor, the Latins planned to attack, rob, and enslave the city's population, and were backed by the regents, the *prōtosebastos* Alexios, and the empress dowager Maria-Xene.<sup>206</sup> Eustathios's statement can perhaps be taken as an indicator of the success of Andronikos's propaganda. The notion that the *prōtosebastos* and Maria-Xene would ever give their Latin following permission to enslave the population of the capital can certainly be ruled out, even in consideration of the dire situation; it would have been political suicide and, in any case, would have been impossible to realize. Genoese, Pisans, and other Westerners were too few in number and lacked the necessary resources.<sup>207</sup>

Eustathios thus makes his disapproval of the massacre plain. He states that the Paphlagonian troops, who were subsequently joined by others who liked "taking the law into their own hands" (νεωτερίζεσθαι), replaced one grave ill (the alleged plan of enslaving the Byzantine population) with another by attacking the Latins.<sup>208</sup> He recounts details that, albeit possibly fictitious, are largely congruent with the portrayal of the event in Latin sources, notably William of Tyre. Eustathios relates that a fire destroyed houses in the city, including all goods within them, as well as a few of the ships in which the Latins intended to flee. Not only armed Westerners were attacked, but also people "whose helpless state made them objects of pity, for both women and children fell to their swords."<sup>209</sup> It is by no means clear that these people were exclusively Latins. Eustathios adds, with implied horror:

But what was even worse was when mothers' wombs were ripped open, and the sword as midwife brought forth the fruit within, so that after the sun had had one untimely glimpse of the child, the darkness of Hades received it and it died before it had fully received life. This was a bestial act, and cannot be compared with any other form of madness.<sup>210</sup>

206 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(3–12).

207 Brand (1968), p. 36, n. 13 (pp. 323–324). Other sources do not mention this rumor, with the exception of Robert of Auxerre, who reinforces the hypothesis that it was a rumor spread by propaganda by stating that Andronikos had moved the hearts of the Greeks by affirming that the Latins would murder the Greeks if they did not kill them first. See also Lilie (1984a), p. 542 (incl. n. 51).

208 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(13–16).

209 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 24(24–27): "καὶ ὡς οὐ μόνον τῶν ἀνοπλιτῶν Λατίνων κατεφέροντο οἱ τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσοις περιποιεῖτο ἔλεον τὸ ἀπάλαμνον· καὶ γυναῖκες γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐρριπτοῦντο ξίφεσι καὶ βρέφη."

210 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(27–30): "Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν δεινόν, οὐχ οὔτω δέ, ὡς ὅτε καὶ γαστέρων ἀναρρηγνυμένων μητρικῶν ἐμαιοῦτο σίδηρος τὰ ἔμβρυα καὶ πρὸ ὥρας

There is no other evidence to support this claim, but it corresponds with the extreme cruelty reported by other sources, William of Tyre in particular, whose portrayal, however, must be assessed with caution because it was likely influenced by an antagonism between Greek and Latin ecclesiastics in his environment in the Holy Land.<sup>211</sup> It is therefore conceivable that Eustathios heard the story from eyewitnesses to the massacre, but it might also be a fanciful addition or based on hearsay. After all, the atrocities committed against Latins in Constantinople mirror Eustathios's account of Thessalonike's fall, which also describes the death of women and children.<sup>212</sup> Moreover, the event was relatively recent when the archbishop wrote about it. For that reason, too, its description is more vivid than that in Choniates's history.

This account is also the only Byzantine source that refers to the murder of the papal legate John.<sup>213</sup> Eustathios calls him "a holy man among the Latins" (ἄνθρωπος ἱερός ἐν Λατίνοις), but states that he does not know much about him: "I do not know if [he came] from the Older Rome on an embassy or from Sicily, but in any case he was a Roman or a Sicilian" (οὐκ οἶδ' εἴτε ἀπὸ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας ἡκων Ῥώμης κατὰ πρεσβείαν εἴτε Σικελίαθεν, πάντως δὲ ἢ Ῥωμαῖος ὢν ἢ Σικελός). The archbishop recounts that the legate was slain by the wicked (κακοί) despite his holy vestment, and despite hopes that it would protect him.<sup>214</sup> As in so many parallel instances in Byzantine literature, it is plausible that it was not important to Eustathios to make further inquiries about the identity of the man because it was not relevant to his wider intentions. In any case, his remarks, clearly sympathetic in tone, indicate that for Eustathios the idea of a (contemporary) Latin holy man was conceivable, and that Latins, despite faults and deviations, could still be regarded as Christians and even pious Christians.<sup>215</sup> This is underlined by a personal digression when the metropolitan compares the horrors suffered by the legate and other Latin clergy in the capital with those inflicted on Byzantines in Thessalonike three years later, where the Sicilian attackers had no more respect for holy persons (ἱερά πρόσωπα) than Andronikos's troops and the mob had for their victims in Constantinople, creating the impression of equivalence between the West and Byzantium in terms

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βλέποντος ἡλίου τὸ μικρὸν ὁ τοῦ Ἰαίδου σκότος μετεξεδέχετο αὐτό, τεθνηκὸς πρὶν ἢ καὶ ζῆσαι τὸ τέλειον. Θηριώδες τοῦτο καὶ ἀσύγκριτον μανίαις ἐτέραις."

211 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.10–13/11–14, vol. 2, pp. 1020–1025. See Neocleous (2019), pp. 98–106, 228–234.

212 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 6(32)–8(27).

213 See Drocourt (2015), pp. 656–657.

214 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 34(31–34).

215 Browning (1995), p. 89.

of sacredness and holiness.<sup>216</sup> In this spirit he concludes the account of the massacre: “At that time, the misfortune was so great for the Latins that, when they cried out against Andronikos, sentence was passed against us, it seems, and their prayers were fulfilled by God.”<sup>217</sup>

Eustathios also refers to the Latin revenge fleet and retaliatory measures that are dealt with in more detail by Choniates and Western sources.<sup>218</sup> He mentions a certain “pirate” called Siphantos, who joined the Sicilians in the war against Byzantium in 1185.<sup>219</sup> He may have been one of the Genoese and Pisan victims of 1182. Eustathios’s account seems to support the hypothesis that Latins were expelled from other cities of the empire at the time of Andronikos’s usurpation.<sup>220</sup> One of them may have been a certain William (Γελέλλμος), whom Eustathios encountered during the occupation of Thessalonike.<sup>221</sup> Eustathios’s account presumably contains references to these refugees only because they were involved in the fate of Thessalonike. It is distorting because of this focus and is far less concerned with Latin piracy in the Aegean, which was clearly more directly connected with the Constantinopolitan riots than was the Sicilian offensive.

Choniates presumably wrote his account of the massacre during the reign of Alexios III, making only minor changes to the description of the event after 1204: the passage is brief and distant in tone, showing no approval of the atrocities and omitting details mentioned by Eustathios and Latin sources. Andronikos, his troops, and the populace are identified as the responsible actors. Choniates describes all of them in unflattering terms. The violent and arbitrary behavior of the mob, as the historian likely saw it, was not unusual and not particularly noteworthy. He probably did not sympathize with their actions, which he likely regarded as an expression of the political chaos of the time, instigated by people he distances himself from in his writings. Furthermore, he wrote about the event fifteen to twenty years later, after which much had happened, so he may have ascribed less significance to it and chosen a very different tone.<sup>222</sup>

216 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 34(34)–36(3).

217 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, 36(3–5): “Τότε δὲ τηλικόν ἦν τὸ κακὸν τοῖς Λατίνοις, ὡς ἐκβόησαντας κατὰ τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου δοκεῖν δικαιωθῆναι καθ’ ἡμῶν καὶ ἀκουστάς θεῶ γενέσθαι τὰς αἰτήσεις αὐτῶν.”

218 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 68(10–15); see Brand (1968), p. 42 (incl. n. 27).

219 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 100(29)–101(1), 106(30)–108(6).

220 Brand (1968), p. 42.

221 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 108–110. On this William and his characterization in Eustathios’s account, see Ch. 9, pp. 296–297.

222 For the portrayal of the populace, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 233(70)–234(90), 270(24)–271(42), 289(90–91), 349(14)–351(51), 391(41)–392(56), 392(71)–393(15),

According to Choniates, Andronikos initiated the massacre by sending his troops into the city. Additionally, he brought the triremes from the *meGas doux* Kontostephanos into position against the Latins.<sup>223</sup> The usurper, as is also clear from Western accounts, was unable or unwilling to stop the ships of the Genoese, Pisans, and other Latins from escaping to take vengeance later. Choniates relates that the Latins in the city when the attack occurred did not consider resistance.<sup>224</sup> If this is accurate, it was likely because of the presumably vastly superior numbers of the attackers. William of Tyre, on the other hand, claims that the Latins fought bravely.<sup>225</sup> The impression that the Latins were caught unawares, according to Greek descriptions of the events, seems to contradict the account of William who claims that the Westerners were warned about an impending attack, which caused some of them to flee. Some had no means to reach a ship in time, including the sick and the old.<sup>226</sup> If referring only to the Latins that remained behind, Choniates's and Eustathios's accounts would not necessarily contradict that of William. Some individuals may not have been informed, were confused about what was going to happen, or paid no heed to the warnings.

Concerning the populace, the *Historia* recounts that commoners incited each other to violence against the Latins, which is plausible and indicative of a mass dynamic. Panic-fueled victims reacted aimlessly, others sought refuge in the “superior houses” (οἴκοις ὑπερηφάνοις), which probably means houses of aristocrats.<sup>227</sup> Whether this is an indicator of good relations between some Latins, especially merchants, and Byzantine aristocrats is difficult to determine.

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399(55–56), 552(77–84), 562(47–48, 57–59). Especially interesting for his assessment of the role of the populace in the massacre is the passage on pp. 233(70)–234(90), where he comments in the context of the civil war preceding it that every city's populace displays a tendency to unreasonableness (ἄλογία), but deems that of Constantinople the worst: “They are thus fairly accused of suffering from inconstancy of character and of being extremely unstable” (εἰκότως οὖν ὡς ἀστασίαν ἤθους νοσοῦν καὶ παλιμβολώτατον διαβέβληται), acting against the interest of others as well as their own. For the portrayal of Andronikos and his followers, see the relevant passages referred to in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, ed. Van Dieten (1975), vol. 2, pp. 13–15 (Index: Andronikos I Komnenos). See also Magoulias (2011); Neocleous (2012a); Kaldellis (2015), esp. pp. 148–149. Importantly, as Kaldellis points out, Choniates may well obscure the fact that the reasons of the actions of the populace were difficult to grasp for him and his peers. Moreover, although the historian does not deny the people their political role, he might have deemed their motives unworthy of consideration, at least in a literary work.

223 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 250(21–24).

224 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 250(26)–251(32).

225 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.12/13.

226 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.12/13.

227 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 250(32–33); Neocleous (2013b), p. 234.



Evidence, however, of ties of kinship, business, and friendship between them can be found in Choniates's history itself.<sup>228</sup> Some were able to flee on ships manned by their fellow Latins, but those unfortunate enough to be apprehended were stripped of all possessions and murdered.<sup>229</sup>

The subsequent vengeance raid is also referred to in the *Historia*, which relates that islands and coastal areas were targeted and that the Latins landed wherever they wanted, as no one was there to stop them, and inflicted as much harm to the *Rōmaioi* as they could.<sup>230</sup> In the account of William of Tyre, the material value of the wealth from plundered monasteries compensated the attackers multiple times for the losses suffered in Constantinople.<sup>231</sup> Strong evidence for this assertion is found in sources on the negotiations with Pisa and Genoa after 1182 and the privileges of 1192.<sup>232</sup> They reveal that Pisans and Genoese could not demand reparations for the losses suffered as a result of the massacre because the Byzantines successfully argued that they had suffered equally great or even greater losses from the piratical raids since 1182.<sup>233</sup> Still, for those who continued to engage in piracy this hardly put an end to their activities or desire for revenge. Those who had escaped to the court of William II of Sicily encouraged him to attack Romania.<sup>234</sup> Some might have been involved in the killing of Andronikos in 1185. Choniates mentions that "some of those of Latin origin" (τινὲς δὲ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Λατινικοῦ γένους)—possibly victims of 1182—drove a sword into the anus of the deposed emperor, which they did to test if their weapon was sharper than the long sword of "a ruthless fellow" who had perforated Andronikos's entrails through the throat. All these executioners boasted of their skills as Andronikos took his final breath.<sup>235</sup>

228 See above; Jacoby (2000); Neocleous (2013b).

229 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 250(33–35).

230 Choniates mentions the Prince islands, Prote and other islands in their vicinity.

231 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.13/14.

232 ISAAKIOS II, *Imperial Documents*, nos. 1 (pp. 1–2, to Balduino Guercio), 2 (pp. 2–3, to Genoa), 3 (pp. 3–23, privilege for Pisa), 4 (pp. 24–25, to Genoa), 5 (pp. 25–37, confirmation of privilege for Genoese); Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1607, pp. 306–308, no. 1609, pp. 308–310, no. 1610, pp. 310–311; Penna (2012), pp. 119–130, 157–167. For the brief, rhetorically charged description of the massacre and the subsequent naval raids in both privileges, which blame the "tyrant Andronikos," see ISAAKIOS II, *Imperial Documents.*, pp. 3(1)–4(3) and 25(1–11); Gastgeber (2008), pp. 68–74.

233 Brand (1968), pp. 209–211; Lilie (1984a), pp. 79–81, 101. That Choniates identifies piracy as one of the worst problems plaguing the empire in the last two decades before the Fourth Crusade suggests his full apprehension of this consequence of the massacre. On the numerous references to widespread piracy in historiography and other Byzantine sources, see below, pp. 123–124, 126–128.

234 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 296(88)–297(93).

235 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 350(46)–351(53).

One further Greek literary source refers to the massacre and reflects Andronikos's propaganda, as it was written during his rule: Michael Choniates's welcoming speech to Demetrios Drimys, *πραίτωρ* of Hellas. It seems that Michael approved of the expulsion of Latins and celebrated the end of their "tyranny" in order to placate and/or please Andronikos's new regime.<sup>236</sup>

Andronikos's regime was completely discredited after his death, and his actions were widely disapproved of even during his reign. The Latins of Constantinople were victims of his, like many Byzantines, and the massacre was deemed unjust. It was the result of the political struggles of 1180–82 and the propaganda against the supporters of the *prōtosebastos* rather than of long-standing "Latinophobia".

### 2.3 *The Equally Contingent Character of Later Attacks in the Capital*

While the attack of 1182 was not the last major act of aggression directed against Latins in Constantinople in the long twelfth century, later outbursts of violence would be equally contingent in character. The second major attack on the Latin quarters occurred in 1187, under Andronikos's successor, Isaakios 11 Angelos. After the rebellion of the general Alexios Branas had been defeated by Isaakios's brother-in-law Conrad of Montferrat, this attack was triggered in the following manner according to Choniates's history. Isaakios gave Conrad's troops permission to batter and massacre the peasants in the vicinity of the capital, as well as Branas's supporters around the Sea of Marmara and on its islands.<sup>237</sup> Choniates describes Isaakios's instructions as "most absurd" (*παραλογώτατον*) in the passage that introduces the attack and recounts the events preceding it. In the hours of darkness following Branas's defeat, liquid fire (i.e., naphtha) was used against the houses of his supporters in the Propontis.<sup>238</sup> On the following morning, Conrad's Latins, as well as the capital's commoners and paupers, marched to the surroundings of the city and committed many atrocities in their eagerness to plunder, utterly disrespecting holy things and venerable monks whom "even an enemy knows how to honor,"

236 See MICHAEL CHONIATES, Works, vol. 1, p. 163(15–21): "Andronikos has destroyed the Latin tyranny, which already, like a winch, insinuated itself and entangled the young sprout of the empire [Alexios II], he has saved the city of Konstantinos from her gross and outlandish lovers who shattered the Romans' affairs completely" (*Καὶ παρὰ τοῦτο αὐτὴ μὲν ἀνεκαλείτο τὸν ἐρώμενον αὐτῆς πάλαι μέγαν Ἀνδρόνικον, ἐφ' ᾧ καταλῦσαι μὲν τὴν ὑφέρπουσαν ἤδη λατινικὴν τυραννίδα καὶ τῷ τῆς βασιλείας ἐπαναφυομένῳ μοσχεύματι ὡς σμίλαξ περιπλεκομένην, κατὰ τὴν τῆς προφητείας εἰκόνα, ἀπαλλάξαι τε τὴν Κωνσταντίνου ἀτόπων καὶ ἀγεννῶν ἐραστῶν ἄνω κάτω κυκόντων τὰ Ῥωμαίων πράγματα*).

237 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 391(27–30).

238 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 391(30–40).

as Choniates phrases it in order to express his strong disapproval. Finally, however, advisers persuaded the *basileus* to intervene by dispatching dignitaries and aristocrats with the authority to stop the atrocities.<sup>239</sup>

Choniates furthermore relates that a number of Byzantine craftsmen were disgusted by the insolent boasting of the Latin soldiers about their victory over Branas, as well as by the intolerable damage they had inflicted on neighbors, but the historian distances himself strongly from the subsequent actions of the Byzantine populace.<sup>240</sup> His remarks are full of contempt. They can be equally applied to the 1182 incident, for the history itself makes a link:

In cohorts and bands they burst in upon the houses of the Latin peoples like a stormy river. Indistinct voices filled the air, not even like a swarm of crows, cranes or starlings which flap their wings with a screeching sound, or hunters who sough and shout to admonish [their dogs]. One called out the other and tore him at his vestment, no one was giving ear to proposals of peace, but like serpents they chocked their ears and slighted every shrewd sorcerer. Not only was this tumultuous concourse of low fellows led by absurd anger, but the desire for the possessions of their adversaries was strong as well. They believed, in fact, that they could chase the Latins with little effort from their houses and plunder without strain everything kept inside them, as they had done during the times of Andronikos.<sup>241</sup>

This testimony provides important insights into the 1182 and 1187 riots. First, neither hatred nor deep-seated resentment of the Latins can be identified as the key factor; rather, it was the populace's desire to plunder. Choniates recounts that drunkenness also played a role. This is thus one of the testimonies that illustrate how it is problematic to refer to the attacks as an expression

239 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 391(41)–392(56).

240 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 392(57–63).

241 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 392(63–75): “κατὰ φάλαγγας ἀγειρόμενοι καὶ σπείρας χειμερίου δίκην χειμάρρου ταῖς τῶν Λατινικῶν γενῶν οἰκίαις προσρήγνυται. αἶ τε οὖν ἄσχημοι φωναὶ τὸν ἀέρα ἐγέμιζον, ὡς οὐδ’ εἰ κολοιῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ ψάρων ἔθνεα κλαγγήδων ἐπτερῶσσαντο ἢ ἐπέκλωζον θηρευταὶ καὶ ἐπεθῶϋζον κυνηγέται, ἀλλήλους τε παρεκάλουν ἐπισπῶμενοι τῶν χιτωνίων. οὐκ ἦν οὖν ἐκεῖ τις τῶν εἰσηγουμένων τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην κατήκοος, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἀσπίδες τὰ ὦτα βύοντες πάντα παρέτρεχον σοφὸν φαρμακόν. Ἐγεμόνευε δὲ τῆς τότε τῶν ἀγοραίων συνδρομῆς οὐ μόνον θυμὸς ἄλογος, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἠρρένου ἔρωσ χρημάτων· ὦντο γὰρ ἐν βραχεί πόνῳ τοὺς Λατίνους ἐκστῆσαι τῶν οἰκημάτων καὶ διαρπάσαι ἅπαν ἀπραγματεύτως τὸ ἔνδον κειμηλιούμενον, ὥσπερ κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους Ἀνδρονίκου διαπεπράχασι.”

An alternative translation of “adversaries” in the passage is “strangers.”

of “Latinophobia.”<sup>242</sup> Furthermore, the Latins who had to defend themselves against the populace may not even have been involved in the preceding raid. It is more plausible that Latin mercenaries and Constantinopolitan commoners and paupers were responsible. Choniates’s remark that the mob was driven by “absurd anger” can be thus understood. The atrocities committed on this raid most likely did arouse outrage, but they were certainly regarded by many as a welcome pretext to launch yet another raid.<sup>243</sup>

It is even less clear who exactly was involved on the Latin side in this attack of 1187 than it is for 1182. The Venetians, whose position in the empire had been officially restored, and possibly Genoese or Pisans who had returned in the meantime, most likely were among the attacked.<sup>244</sup> Characteristically, Choniates only uses the generic terms “Latins,” “Latin peoples,” and “Latin community.”<sup>245</sup> This time, however, these Latins were better prepared and repelled the onslaught. The attackers were ready to strike again the following morning, this time with better armor and weapons, but eminent men sent by the emperor appeared and managed to subdue them. The government had every reason to act this way. Latins fought on both sides in the civil war

242 Cf., e.g., Brand (1968), p. 41 (speaking of the Constantinopolitan populace’s “century-old hatred of the western interlopers in their midst”); Ahrweiler (1975), p. 87; Lilie (1984a), pp. 577 (affirming that the Constantinopolitan populace was “full of hatred against the Latins,” without substantiating this view with evidence, except for the attacks and demonstrations in the decades before and during the Fourth Crusade), 604 (stating that Italian merchants were no doubt generally disliked in Byzantium); Nicol (1988), pp. 106–108; Simpson 1999 (e.g., p. 64: “Yet, the lower classes of Byzantium, and especially the people of Constantinople, constituted the one social group that clearly manifested its contempt, and in some cases outright hatred toward the Latins”); Angold (2003), p. 45. The criticism of such views is shared, for example, by Chrysos (2003), p. 135; Neocleous (2013b), pp. 228, 233–234, 237, 242–245, 249–250. Contrary to Neocleous’s affirmation, however, Choniates does say that the Byzantines were sober during the second attack.

243 Neocleous (2013b), pp. 242–243.

244 Andronikos had negotiated with them and invited them to return (1183/84). Subsequently, they re-established their quarter, and Andronikos might have issued a new privilege for them in the spring of 1185, but there is no conclusive evidence for that, as shown by Nicol (1988), p. 109. In any case, a series of new privileges was finally negotiated with Isaakios II and issued in February 1187. See Brand (1968), pp. 196–198; Lilie (1984a), pp. 24–35, 543, 547–551, 562–68; Nicol (1988), pp. 108–114, 119; Dölger and Wirth (1995), nos. 1576–1578, pp. 292–294; Penna (2012), pp. 46–55; Neocleous (2013b), p. 242. For the subsequent Venetian privilege of 1189, see Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1590, p. 299; Penna (2012), pp. 56–61. For the possible Genoese and Pisan presence in 1187, see Brand (1968), p. 208; Lilie (1984a), pp. 295, 569, 571; Neocleous (2013b), p. 242.

245 See p. 392(64–65): “the houses of the Latin peoples” (αἱ τῶν Λατινικῶν γενῶν οἰκίαι), and p. 393(90): “those from the Latin community” (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Λατίνης φυλῆς).

between Isaakios II and Branas.<sup>246</sup> The emperor had no reason to allow an attack against them, but many reasons to prevent a setback in his relations with Western powers. Choniates displays no sympathy for the attack either. In this passage, he does not portray the “barbarians,” as they are called in other instances, as simpletons; rather, it was the Byzantine commoners and paupers who were tricked by a Latin ruse. The Westerners made the corpses of the defeated Byzantines look like those of their fellow Latins in order to convince the imperial envoys to put an end to the violence of the rabble (σύρφακες).<sup>247</sup> Additionally, the second attack occurred in the morning,<sup>248</sup> when they were not yet led, as Choniates puts it, by their “accustomed leader, I mean the wine” (τοῦ συνήθους ἡγεμόνος, τοῦ οἴνου φημί). Had “those who used to be heavier with wine than tapirs” (οἱ καὶ ταπύρων οἰνοβάρεστεροι)<sup>249</sup> been drunk already, no one could have stopped them, according to Choniates, who quotes a satirical poem about the drunkenness of the Constantinopolitans.<sup>250</sup> Clearly, the historian, with discreet reference to his own exalted status, vilifies the capital’s populace pejoratively and unequivocally, whereas he displays an ambiguous attitude towards the West and Westerners.

The popular uprising of 1192 was of a different character. It had been triggered by Genoese and Pisan pirates. A fleet under Guglielmo Grasso attacked a Venetian ship which carried a Byzantine envoy returning from an embassy to Saladin as well as the envoys of the sultan. It was plundered and many, including a considerable number of Byzantines, the sultan’s envoys, and Syrian merchants, were killed. The pirates proceeded to plunder another ship, from which they captured the bishop of Paphos. Prior to this, Genoese and Pisans had already sacked the coast of Rhodes. The news of these events apparently caused outrage in Constantinople and subsequently led to a public demonstration that caused Isaakios II to hold uninvolved Pisans and Genoese liable and demand justice from the perpetrators’ mother cities.<sup>251</sup> Choniates may have

246 Cheynet (1990), p. 439; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 403, n. 168 (p. 723).

247 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 393(90–5).

248 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 393(8): “[...] for the hour was early [...]” (πρώϊος γὰρ ἦν ὁ καιρός).

249 On this allusion to Strabo, which is obviously meant to reinforce the mockery of the populace, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 403, n. 166 (p. 723).

250 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 393(5–15).

251 Brand (1968), pp. 211–212; Lilie (1984a), pp. 573–574; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1612, p. 312, no. 1616, pp. 314–315, no. 1618, p. 315; Penna (2012), pp. 171–192; Favreau-Lilie (2013), pp. 293, 297–298, who notes that such negotiations with mother cities over Italian piratical activities were a common phenomenon at the time, not just with Byzantine, but also with other Christian and Islamic rulers.

omitted this episode, about which he was certainly informed, because it was too similar to others with which it shares two of his main themes: piracy and popular uprisings.<sup>252</sup> Again, however, it does not suggest a general resentment against the Latin residents of Constantinople.

A final major outbreak of violence against the Latins (Choniates: “the houses of the peoples from the West”) in Constantinople was similar to those of 1182 and 1187, at least based on Choniates’s judgement. It occurred when the army of the Fourth Crusade was encamped outside the city walls in the summer of 1203 and took place before the escape of Alexios III.<sup>253</sup> Once again, the historian condemns the Constantinopolitan populace, whom he blames for an absurd and indiscriminate attack that made “no distinction between friend and foe.”<sup>254</sup>

He also draws attention to the friendly relations between some Byzantines and Latins, stating that the Amalfitans (literally οἵπερ ἐκ τῆς Ἀμάλφης) were “nurtured in Roman customs” (ἤβησιν ἐντεθραμμένοι Ῥωμαϊκοῖς) and were “disgusted by this wickedness and thoughtlessness,” (ἐδυσχέραριν οὖν πρὸς τὴν ἀτοπίαν ταύτην καὶ ἀβουλίαν) as were “those from Pisa, who had chosen [the city] of Konstantinos [as their home]” (οἱ τῶν ἐκ τῆς Πίσσης τὴν Κωνσταντίνου ἀνθεῖλοντο).<sup>255</sup> That quite a few Italians were born in the capital and dwelt there for much of their lives, thereby developing friendship and business ties with the Byzantines, is supported by other sources.<sup>256</sup> An Amalfitan presence in the capital is also attested in the privilege for Pisa from 1192.<sup>257</sup> Choniates subsequently seizes another occasion to criticize the Angeli:

252 Both phenomena are portrayed as symptoms of imperial incompetence and decline, one of the central themes of the *Historia*, but the events related to them are recounted only selectively.

253 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 552(76–90). On the extension and location of the Pisan and Genoese quarters before the conquest of 1204, see Berger (1995), esp. pp. 160–163. The riot probably took place under Alexios III, as Choniates states, and it was the same emperor who later tried to placate the Latin victims. Many modern accounts of the Fourth Crusade affirm that it occurred in August 1203, right before the Latin attack on a mosque and the second fire in Constantinople, but they ignore Choniates’s clear statement. See, e.g., Queller, Madden, and Andrea (1997), p. 144; and Neocleous (2013b), p. 245. Lillie (1984a), pp. 586–587, and NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 217, n. 18 (p. 548), do, however, account for Choniates’s specifications.

254 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 552(76–81). See also p. 564(7–9): “That which is base, namely, is stronger in the Constantinopolitans, and by far (for the truth is dearer [to me] than fellow citizens)” (ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ χεῖρω ἐπικρατέστερα παρὰ τοῖς Κωνσταντινουπολίταις καὶ μάλιστα [φιλτέρα γὰρ ὑπὲρ τοὺς ὁμογενεῖς ἢ ἀλήθεια]).

255 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 552(81–84).

256 Brand (1968), pp. 218–219; Neocleous (2013b), pp. 228, 233, 246.

257 ISAAKIOS II, *Imperial Documents*, no. 2, pp. 18–22; Berger (1995), p. 161.

Having not yet taken flight, the emperor Alexios placated those from these peoples with pleasant prospects for the future and relieved them of much of their sorrow. When he escaped, however, and Isaakios ruled [again], he [Isaakios] reconciled those from Pisa with the Venetians, contriving also this against us. For they [the Pisans] crossed to Peraia, where the enemies were encamped, became comrades to their former adversaries and companions at their table, naturally united in everything and attached to one another.<sup>258</sup>

This is another of several instances in which Choniates criticizes an imprudent Byzantine stance on the West and Westerners.<sup>259</sup> The argument is clear: some of them were clearly foes of the Byzantine Empire, but others were potential friends and allies. Even their barbaric way of life could be overcome by their adoption of Roman customs.<sup>260</sup> The alienation of the Pisans and Amalfitans may indeed have been detrimental, as their number was potentially quite significant.<sup>261</sup>

A much more hostile tone is adopted when Choniates narrates how the alienated Pisans joined with the Venetians and crusaders in an attack. This is unsurprising because he personally suffered the consequences. “That malicious body of troops” (σύνταγμα ἐκεῖνο τὸ πονηρόν) chose to target a mosque. “This violation of the law was committed foolishly and [went] beyond any expectation” (ταῦτα παραλόγως καὶ ὑπὲρ δόκησιν πᾶσαν παρηνομεῖτο). The historian implies that, in this instance, it was justified that the people took up arms and came to the aid of the Muslims. The Latins, subsequently compelled to withdraw, resorted to setting fire to large parts of the city, doubtless a personally bitter experience for the historian and a plausible explanation for his condemnatory words.<sup>262</sup> As the reader is told in the LO-version of the same

258 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 552(84–90): “μήπω τοῖνον φυγὰς ὁ βασιλεὺς ὀφθεῖς Ἀλέξιος χρησταῖς ἐλπίσι τοὺς ἐκ τῶνδε τῶν γενῶν ἐβουκόλει καὶ τὸ τῆς λύπης ἀφήρει πολὺ. ὡς δ’ ὁ μὲν δρασμῶ ἐχρήσατο, βασιλεύσας δ’ ἦν Ἰσαάκιος, καταλλάσσει τοὺς ἐκ Πίσσης τοῖς Βενετικοῖς, καθ’ ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦτο ἐπιτεχνώμενος· οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὴν Περαιάν ἀπάραντες, ἐν ἧ κατέλυον οἱ διάφοροι, γίνονται τοῖς πρῶν ἀντίφοροι σύσκηνοι καὶ ὁμόδειπνοι καὶ τὰ πάντα συμφυεῖς καὶ ὁμόφρονες.”

259 See esp. Ch. 4, p. 179, Ch. 12, p. 352, Ch. 14, p. 377, and section 7 of Ch. 15.

260 A good example is NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 639(73–75): “Aldebrantinos hailed from among the Italians, indeed with respect to his origin, but he was wholly brought up according to Roman customs” (Ἀλδεβραντίνος, ἐξ Ἰταλῶν μὲν τὴν γένεσιν ἔλκων, ἀκριβῶς δ’ ἐντεθραμμένος τοῖς Ῥωμαϊκοῖς ἔθεσι). See also Ch. 14, p. 401.

261 Brand (1968), p. 247. In contrast to Brand, however, Villehardouin’s allegation that 15,000 refugees went over to the Latin side should not be taken literally, but rather as an indication that they were numerous.

262 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 553(91)–556(77).

passage,<sup>263</sup> as well as in another instance,<sup>264</sup> one of Choniates's houses, and a splendid one, perished in the flames.

These incidents occurred in a moment of crisis, an extreme situation that involved the threatening presence of a large army and fleet and the burden of heavy taxation. Moreover, Alexios III certainly engaged in propaganda against the crusaders before his escape to strengthen his position as leader. Clergymen also fueled hatred of the crusaders in this situation, comparing them to dogs.<sup>265</sup> Like earlier outbursts of violence, therefore, the occurrences of 1203 should not with any certainty be regarded as an expression of deep-seated pre-existing hostile attitudes held by a majority of the population.

#### 2.4 *Μεγαρείτης (Margaritone) and Καφούρης (Gafforio)*

In Niketas Choniates's history, piracy is identified as a serious blight plaguing the Byzantine Empire and a symptom of imperial decline, especially from the 1180s.<sup>266</sup> Although Italians were greatly involved in this piracy, Choniates differentiates Italian pirates from Italian residents of the empire and the capital in particular, for whom he suggests friendly relations. This indicates that this piracy did not give rise to undifferentiated "anti-Latin" hostility.<sup>267</sup>

Margaritone (referred to as Μεγαρείτης in the history) is the first pirate leader mentioned by Choniates and symbolizes imperial failure at sea.<sup>268</sup> He hailed from Brindisi<sup>269</sup> and assisted the ruler of Cyprus, Isaakios Komnenos, in fending off Emperor Isaakios II's fleet dispatched to recover the island. In this context, Isaakios of Cyprus is condemned as a tyrant of the worst sort and Margaritone as "the most formidable pirate on the high seas at the time." He easily overcame the imperial fleet, and Isaakios allowed him to deal with the captains of the triremes as he pleased.<sup>270</sup> The pirate chose to take them to Sicily, where he recognized the "tyrant" of the island as his lord. It was likely appropriate to Choniates's audience that a barbaric pirate would choose to serve tyrants, first Isaakios, and then the Norman king (William II) of Sicily.

263 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 555(62–64 B, LO): "ἐμῶν δόμων."

264 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 587(4–6).

265 Neocleous (2019), pp. 159–161.

266 On (Italian) piracy in Byzantium in general, see the references below.

267 See above.

268 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 369(70)–370(94).

269 This is not specified; see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 347, n. 75 (p. 706).

270 See also Brand (1968), p. 172.



Conversely, it emphasizes Isaakios's terrible character that he would deal with such a man.<sup>271</sup>

The activities of the Genoese Gafforio (Καφούρηγς in the history) during the reign of Alexios III were another element of the increasing piracy the Byzantine government had to deal with in the last two decades of the twelfth century, and severely compromised Byzantine-Genoese relations in the 1190s.<sup>272</sup> Choniates's remarks concerning these pirates do not seem exaggerated and reflect the concerns of his time. The naval raid mentioned in the *Historia* is referred to in terms of another great misfortune befalling the empire. Like his Latin and non-Latin predecessors, Gafforio plundered coastal towns and assaulted islands. The plundering of Atramytion was especially profitable to him. Choniates, once again, uses a reference to a Latin pirate to criticize those in charge of the imperial government, suggesting they were "snoring deeply" (ῥέγκοντες βαθέως) and inactive for a long time before taking action. It is interesting that this scathing comment is absent from the history's earlier version, written when Choniates served in Alexios III's government.<sup>273</sup>

The story of Gafforio's defeat is another element of Choniates's narrative of Byzantine decline. When the emperor finally sent a fleet against Gafforio under the Calabrian Steiriones, the pirate managed to outwit Steiriones. As a result, he could continue his raids and extort more money, while meeting even less resistance. Alexios III, being, at least for the moment, powerless to stop the attacks, opted for negotiations with Gafforio, who still had connections among the Genoese in Constantinople. These Genoese were now employed by Alexios to negotiate with the pirate. Choniates explains that Gafforio had traded in the capital before he turned to piracy but had been insubordinate even then: the *doux* of the fleet had fined him for damages he had inflicted.<sup>274</sup> Alexios, still pretending to negotiate, prepared his fleet under Steiriones, who met with Gafforio under the pretext that the emperor wanted to buy him off, but instead launched a surprise attack, capturing all of the pirate's ships except four commanded by Gafforio's cousin.<sup>275</sup> The historian, drawing attention

271 The Life of Saint Christodoulos offers a parallel account of Margaritone's activities in Cyprus and Patmos: see Lavagnini (1975); Vranoussi (1976).

272 Alexios III held the Genoese responsible for Gafforio's raids. Only in 1201, after two years of negotiations, was the Genoese position in the capital restored. See Lilie (1984a), pp. 586–587.

273 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 481(95)–482(8), with p. 482(7–8 app.).

274 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 482(8–25).

275 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 482(25–34). See Brand (1968), pp. 213–214, p. 371, n. 10; Lilie (1984a), pp. 582–583.

once again to the piracy problem and giving the emperor no credit for this partial success, intended for the episode to reflect badly on Alexios and his government. It was not his concern that the disastrous situation had not been of their making but was mainly a consequence of Pisans and Genoese turning permanently into pirates following the riots of 1182 and the defeat against Margaritone in 1187.<sup>276</sup>

That Genoese and Pisan piracy remained a severe plague in the Aegean beyond 1204 is reflected towards the end of Niketas Choniates's *Historia*. His criticism of the disunity of the Byzantines after the fall of the city includes the comment that each ruler, looking only for his own advantage, allowed the vicious Latins to launch further attacks on the Aegean islands with impunity. Specifically, he also has harsh words for the Genoese freebooters who took the island of Crete at the time by means of a ruse:

Many [Latins] assembled soldiers, hired some horsemen and went to Roman islands, and no one stopped them. Genoese pirates did likewise, scum and debris of mankind, who always and everywhere they went acted basely and nowhere were they inferior to anyone in their misdeeds. They procured five round-bellied ships for themselves, prepared 24 triremes and went to Krete, posing as merchants at first, but then they suddenly attacked as enemies and took possession of the whole island without any effort.<sup>277</sup>

Choniates probably meant to call out his fellow Byzantines for their cowardice, inaction, and political quarrels in face of the Latin conquests, with the Genoese attack on Crete serving as an example designed to illustrate the results of such shortcomings.

<sup>276</sup> Lilie (1984a), pp. 175–176, 306, 633.

<sup>277</sup> NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 639(87–95): “Πολλοὶ τοίνυν μέτριον συγκροτήσαντες στόλον καὶ ἱππότηας βραχεῖς μισθωσάμενοι Ῥωμαϊκαῖς ἐγκατεκολπίζοντο νήσοις ὡς πάντη πάντως ἐρημαζούσαις τοῦ ἐπαρήξοντος. ὅθεν πειραταὶ τινες Γενουῖται, περιψήματα ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἀμβλώματα, οὐ κατὰ τοῦτο μὲν τινος ὑπερφέροντες, κατὰ δ' ἐκεῖνο τὰ δεύτερα φέροντες, ἀλλ' ἀπανταχῆ πονήρως πράττοντες καὶ δυσδαιμόνως, στρογγύλων πέντε νηῶν ὀθενοῦν εὐπορήσαντες καὶ σκάφη τρίκροτα κατηρτικότες πρὸς τοῖς εἴκοσι τέσσαρα ἐς τὴν Κρήτην διαπλωίζονται· καὶ πλασάμενοι τοὺς ἐμπόρους, εἶτα ἐπιθέμενοι ὡς πολέμιοι, τῆς νήσου ξυμπάσης κατίσχυσαν εὐμαρέστατα.” See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, pp. 395–397, nn. 325–326 (pp. 630–631).

### 3 Encomiastic Praise and Approval with Hindsight of the Byzantine Network in Italy

#### 3.1 *Other Alliances with Italian Cities*

Under Manouel I, the Byzantine presence in Italy reached its high point in the long twelfth century. The well-known portrayal in Choniates's *Historia* has a historical basis:<sup>278</sup>

There was not even one of the Italian cities or of those even farther away in which this emperor did not have someone tied to him by oath and faithfully disposed toward him. Indeed, it was even overheard and discovered for him how the opponents of the Romans there, entering the chambers of chambers [the best hidden chambers], concocted mischief and stirred up trouble in secret.<sup>279</sup>

Choniates and Kinnamos, whose summarizing presentation resembles that of Choniates,<sup>280</sup> name Italian cities enrolled among Manouel's allies, but Western sources complement their accounts. Kinnamos remarks that Cremona, Padua, and "countless others of the most outstanding cities among the Ligurians" (πλείστα ἄλλαι τῶν ἐν Λιγούροις περιφανεστάτων πόλεων) went over to the emperor during the war against Frederick in Italy. Choniates mentions not only the destruction of Milan's walls (1162)—which Kinnamos refers to as well—but also that Manouel helped to rebuild them.<sup>281</sup> From the 1160s on, and regardless of his intentions, Frederick Barbarossa appeared capable of and

278 Georgi (1990), p. 180; Magdalino (1993b), p. 83.

279 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 201(5–9): "Ἄλλ' οὐδέ τις ἦν τῶν Ἰταλιωτῶν ἢ τῶν ἐπιπορρωτέρω πόλεων, καθ' ἣν ὁ βασιλεὺς οὗτος οὐκ εἶχεν ὁμότην οἰκείον καὶ φρονούντ' αἰ πιστά. ἀμέλει καὶ ὅσα εἰς τὰ ταμεία τῶν ταμείων εἰσιόντες ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐτύρουν καὶ ἐτύρβαζον ὅπόσοι τῶν ἐκεῖ Ῥωμαίοις ἀντίφρονες ἀκουστά ἦν ἐκείνω καὶ ἔκπυστα." On this passage, see also Zorzi (2012), p. 288.

280 See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 228(12–19): "It also came to the attention of the emperor Manouel how he would stop his [Barbarossa's] advance [...] So, dispatching secretly some undistinguished persons to the peoples there and those situated within the Ionian Gulf, he ordered them to remind them of Frederikos's insatiable greed and aroused [them] to resistance" (καὶ δι' ἐπιμελείας βασιλεῖ Μανουῆλ ἐγένετο, ὅπως ἂν τῆς ὀρμῆς αὐτὸν στήσῃ [...] ὅθεν καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν ἔθνη τὰ τῆδε καὶ ὅσα κόλπου ἐντὸς Ἰδρυταί τοῦ Ἰονίου τῶν ἀσημοτέρων τινὰς ἀφανῶς ἐκπέμπων τῆς Φρεδερίκου τε αὐτὰ ὑπομνήσκων ἐκέλευεν ἀπληστίας καὶ πρὸς ἀντίστασιν ἡγειρεῖν).

281 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 228(6–10); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 200(78–82). Western sources confirm Manouel's financial support of Milan: see Zorzi (2012), pp. 286–287.

willing to launch an invasion of Byzantium, at least under the condition that he secure his rule in Italy. Choniates names Venice, Pisa, Genoa, and Ancona as cities that Manouel attempted to win over for defensive purposes, hoping to prevent a concerted attack against Byzantium. To convince and encourage the “Italians” to resist Barbarossa, the emperor granted them quarters in the capital and sent money and embassies.<sup>282</sup>

Western evidence of Byzantine influence in Italy during Manouel's reign confirms the accounts of Kinnamos, Choniates, and imperial panegyric, and shows that his Italian network must have been extensive. There are indications that several cities, or at least their representatives, accepted Byzantine imperial overlordship in one way or another—besides Venice, Pisa, and Genoa,<sup>283</sup> there is evidence for Cremona, Padua, Siena, Milan, Ravenna, and Ancona.<sup>284</sup> Byzantium forcefully pursued the policy of obtaining formal recognition of overlordship, so much so that the historiographer Boncompagno says that Manouel sought to buy entire Italian cities in order to return them to their rulers as fiefs.<sup>285</sup> Kinnamos mentions that, during Manouel's Italian war (1155–56), the town of Viesti (Βεστία) had previously joined the imperial cause.<sup>286</sup> Not all of the cities, castles and towns that Byzantines won control over, or at least official allegiance, can be identified with certainty, but Kinnamos names San Flaviano,<sup>287</sup> Bari (Βάρις), Trani (Τράνις), Giovinazzo (Γιβενάτζιον), the fortresses of Andria (Ἄντρον) and Bosco (Βόσκον), Montepeloso (Μοντοπολώ), Gravina (Γραβίνα), Πολυμίλιον (probably Palagiano), Mottola (Μόλισσα), Monopoli (Μονόπολις), Ostuni (Ὀστούνιον), Brindisi (Βρεντέσιον, without the citadel), and the region of Ἀλίτζιον (probably Alezio), which is described as populous and fertile.<sup>288</sup> That Kinnamos names these places, often giving details of their conquest or surrender, indicates pride in the Byzantine successes and his driving concern to glorify Emperor Manouel's reign.

282 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 199(59)–200(69).

283 See the first and second section of this chapter.

284 For Cremona and Padua, see above; for Ancona, see below; for Milan, Ravenna, and Siena, see Classen (1960); Hiestand (1986).

285 Lamma (1968), pp. 390–391 and n. 1; Hiestand (1986), p. 33.

286 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 137(4–9).

287 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 137(16–21). See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 108, n. 7 (p. 247).

288 Bari: pp. 138(14)–140(23); Trani and Giovinazzo: p. 141(1–4); Andria: 144(21)–145(1); Bosco: pp. 148(10)–150(17); Montepeloso and Gravina: p. 150(18–22); Polymilion and Mottola: pp. 152(12)–153(12); Monopoli: pp. 154(12)–157(16); Ostuni: p. 159(7–9); Brindisi: pp. 159(9)–161(11)—its ancient name, Τεμέση, is given as well; Halitzion: p. 161(14–17). On the identification of Πολυμίλιον and Ἀλίτζιον, see IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 118, n. 14 (p. 248), p. 124, n. 18 (p. 248).

Both Byzantine historians of the period appear content to outline the general orientation of Manouel's Italian policies without going into detail, the exception being that of Kinnamos for the Italian war of 1155–56, with which he had some personal connection.<sup>289</sup> Both present them as a major element in Manouel's effort to deal with the threat posed by Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>290</sup> In the case of Choniates, who witnessed numerous incursions into the Byzantine heartland during his lifetime, it is especially understandable that he expresses approval of the defensive nature of Manouel's support of Italian cities and other powers.<sup>291</sup> While this tendency can again be described as generic and introspective, the portrayal of Manouel's Italian network also highlights the complexity of Byzantine-Western relations and that they were not bound to evolve in a hostile direction as has often been claimed with the conquest of 1204 in mind.

### 3.2 *The Ἀγκωνῖται (People of Ancona) and Their Supporters*

Ancona was an important Byzantine center of operations in Italy during the twelfth century:<sup>292</sup> from there, Manouel I carried out diplomatic missions, as well as defensive and expansionist policies.<sup>293</sup> Encomiastic works accordingly reflect this importance and Byzantine-Western cultural proximity, but also portray the city and its inhabitants for propagandistic purposes. Choniates, too, appears to feature these encomia, while introducing a critical note at the end of his account of the siege of Ancona in 1173.

289 See esp. Ch. 7, p. 218, Ch. 9, p. 279.

290 See Ch. 12.

291 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 199(43)–200(69), 203(58–74). After 1204, alluding to the sack of Constantinople and the invasions and threats of invasion which preceded it, he added (pp. 203[75]–204[78], see apparatus): “What [happened] afterwards clearly showed that this was well and soundly thought through and accomplished, but when he himself had left this life, the circumstances, lacking a wise helmsman, almost sank the ship of the empire” (“Ὅτι μέντοι καλῶς τε καὶ εὐφρόνως διενοεῖτο οὕτω καὶ διεπράττετο, σαφῶς ὑπέδειξε τὰ μετέπειτα, ἤνίκα τὴν μὲν ἐνταῦθα ζωὴν αὐτὸς μετηλλάχει, τὰ δὲ γε πράγματα κυβερνήτην ἀποβαλόντα σοφὸν μικροῦ τὸ τῆς βασιλείας σκάφος ἐβάπτισαν). See also the discussion above, pp. 97–98. EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 274(45)–275(84), goes in a similar direction, stating that Manouel successfully kept the empire's enemies occupied in their own lands so they would have no chance to invade. See also *ibid.*, pp. 282(25)–283(46); Magdalino (1993b), p. 459; Zorzi (2012), p. 285.

292 Carile (1974), p. 18; Abulafia (1984), p. 196.

293 On medieval Ancona from the late eleventh to the early fifteenth centuries—with a focus on trade and external relations—see Leonhard (1983), esp. the first chapter which deals with the twelfth century and Ancona's relations with Byzantium. On Ancona's Byzantine connections, see also Lamma (1968), pp. 383–394; Schreiner (1971); Carile (1974); Pertusi (1980); Abulafia (1984); Niederkorn (2000); Stone (2005).

In his references to Ancona as a major military and diplomatic base of the empire in Italy, Kinnamos mentions a mission of Ioannes Axouchos's during the war against Roger II. Axouchos, however, never reached the city.<sup>294</sup> Kinnamos also refers to Axouchos's son Alexios, who, after Manouel's first effort to reconquer parts of southern Italy had failed, made a renewed attempt to win parts of the peninsula for his emperor, in the process subduing many cities. Kinnamos explains that the Anconitans had sworn oaths to the emperor that they would assist him and allow him to use their city as an operational base. However, they explicitly excluded joining Manouel's side should it come to a war against Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>295</sup> The passage reflects Manouel's intention to establish Byzantine outposts in Italy in the march of Ancona and Apulia, including his openness to pursuing this endeavor in cooperation with Barbarossa.<sup>296</sup> The emperor, however, abandoned his original goal of restoring Byzantine rule in southern Italy for the time being<sup>297</sup>—Choniates depicts Axouchos's mission as a maneuver to improve conditions for a peace treaty.<sup>298</sup>

The main event connected with Ancona in Byzantine historical accounts is its siege in 1173, the portrayal of which is introspectively oriented.<sup>299</sup> Kinnamos places it simultaneously with a major campaign Manouel conducted in Asia Minor. Germans and Venetians besieged the city by land and sea.<sup>300</sup> During the siege, the defenders nearly ran out of provisions and the city was ready to fall to the enemy. Kinnamos reports that a “woman, an Italian by birth, but more generous than anyone else, and particularly masculine” (τις γυνή, Ἰταλὴ μὲν τὸ γένος μεγαλόφρων δὲ εἰπέρ τις καὶ ἀρρενωπὸς μάλιστα) saved the day. This woman, Aldruda Frangipane, countess of Bertinoro, like Anna Komnene or Manouel's daughter, Maria, is described as a woman with a manly spirit.<sup>301</sup>

294 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 102(1–18).

295 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 170(5–20). Lilie (1984a), pp. 409–410, thinks that the treaty was concluded when Michael Palaiologos stayed in Ancona during the Italian war, in the autumn of 1155.

296 See the first section of Ch. 12 and the third section of Ch. 15.

297 Kinnamos's encomiastic narrative gives this impression in an effort to balance the preceding defeat, though not blamed on Manouel himself, with a splendid success directly following it. See Ch. 9, pp. 286–287.

298 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 97(63)–98(93).

299 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35, for the introspective character of Byzantine literature more generally.

300 Eustathios also speaks of a “land war” (πεζομαχία) and a “naval war” (ναυμαχία): see EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 270(36)–271(38) and also p. 275 (86–87).

301 Both were first-born children of emperors and born in the purple, and they were reluctant to renounce the imperial throne solely because they were women. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 10(52–56) and 171(40); Ch. 1, p. 48, and the introduction to Ch. 3.

Kinnamos also applauds her chaste life as a widow.<sup>302</sup> This praise can be attributed to Aldruda acting in the interests of Byzantium, and the remark that she was masculine serves to make her role as a general more plausible. The presentation of “Italian” and “generous” as opposites (Ἰταλὴ μὲν μεγαλόφρων δὲ) may allude to the unflattering, topical image conveyed of Venetians and (Italian) trade in particular.<sup>303</sup>

Eustathios makes even more of the victory at Ancona in his Epiphany oration of 1174. He introduces the event by announcing great news from Italy and the West.<sup>304</sup> He suggests that this victory be held in greater esteem than that in the east over the Turks because it was accomplished from afar, although he is quick to stress their interconnectedness, likening them to twins.<sup>305</sup> The main discussion of the victory at Ancona takes place only from paragraph 13 of the oration. The orator emphasizes the special character of the event, calling it a “manifold wonder” (πολλαπλοῦν θαῦμα) that generates “amazement” (ἔκπληξις). Engaging in word play, he states that the city of the Picentines (an ancient people dwelling in the region) did not belie its name: Ancona (Ἀγκών), which can mean “elbow” in Greek, is fitting given that the Anconitans blocked the attackers’ advance and caused them to stumble.<sup>306</sup>

Eustathios has high praise for the qualities of the Anconitans, their judgment, military organization, willingness to endure hunger and toil, and devotion to the emperor, qualities that are meant to reflect positively on the *basileus*, and which Choniates critically questions. Whether sincere or not, however, the praise indicates that such qualities were conceivable for Westerners and is another indication that their image is not as unequivocally negative as has often been claimed in the scholarship. The rhetor expresses amazement at how the diverse Italian population united for the defense of Ancona, and at their respect for the emperor and awareness of his great reputation—a reference to the assistance of William of Marchisella and Aldruda Frangipane. Eustathios states that the price of the aid was the emperor’s protectorate over Ancona.<sup>307</sup> This did not mean in practice that Manouel meant to integrate Ancona in the

302 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 288(12–19). This is certainly meant as a virtue. Kinnamos attributes the same moderation in sensual desires (σωφροσύνη) to the empress Eirene, Manouel’s mother (p. 10[1–2]).

303 See above, pp. 76–77

304 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 268(62)–269(71).

305 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, p. 270(4–36).

306 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, p. 275(85–3); see also EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 43, nn. 194, 195.

307 See also Carile (1974), pp. 25–26.

theme of Dalmatia or treat its inhabitants like other subjects.<sup>308</sup> Nevertheless, as expected from a panegyric source, the Anconitans are referred to as Manouel's subjects (ὕπηχοι). The *basileus* knows "how to deploy his servants: thus, he causes those for whom he represents God to lay down their lives on his behalf" (τοὺς αὐτοῦ θεράποντας [...] διατίθεσθαι [...] οὕτως, οἷς μὲν μιμείται θεὸν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς, τιθέναι ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ ποιεῖ τὰς ψυχάς). The rhetor further develops the theme: "What slave acts thus upon being commanded, in the way they, the free people, uncommanded by the emperor, have become his servants?" (τίς οὕτω δοῦλος πράττει ἐξ ἐπιτάγματος, ὡς οὔτοι, τὸ αὐτόνομον ἔθνος, ἀκέλευστοι τῷ βασιλεῖ δεδουλεύκασιν;)—an allusion to the de facto independence of the city. Eustathios plays with a concept based on Psalm 44/45(11–12), one often brought up in other contemporary sources and applied to other Westerners as well, of forgetting one's origin and family in favor of embracing a new family or, in this instance, the rule of the Byzantine *basileus*. The competition with Barbarossa<sup>309</sup> is clearly implied and addressed by Eustathios himself.<sup>310</sup>

The victory was celebrated as an imperial victory and made use of by panegyrists. Eustathios's account reflects how Manouel's support for resistance against Barbarossa aimed at obtaining formal recognition of Byzantine overlordship whenever possible, even if the main motivation was to advance the empire's realpolitik and check developments that might threaten it. Lilie stresses that this course of action did not correspond to the original intentions of the Byzantine government, a factor Eustathios's oration covers up entirely. The Byzantines had hoped that Barbarossa would honor his apparent promise and allow them to regain parts of Italy. This prospect even induced Manouel to rebuff Sicily and break with Venice. Evidently, Byzantine hopes were dashed at Ancona, even though the *basileus* attempted to forge an alliance with the Hohenstaufen emperor the following year.<sup>311</sup>

Attributing great and natural military prowess to the Anconitans—a celebrated virtue in Byzantium often ascribed to Westerners—Eustathios's history then addresses something that makes the siege more extraordinary, indeed miraculous: the role played by a woman. Aldruda Frangipane, is said to have deeply loved the emperor, crying his name and proclaiming him as her master (δεσπότης), as also reported by Kinnamos. More than Kinnamos or Choniates,

308 Abulafia (1984), p. 212. However, the theoretical acceptance of Byzantine overlordship likely entailed a certain sense of obligation, and Manouel might also have intended to make Ancona part of the empire in practice, at least in the long run.

309 See Ch. 12.

310 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Orations, no. 16, pp. 275(3)–278(82).

311 See Lilie (1984a), pp. 496–497; also Ch. 15, p. 417.



however, Eustathios emphasizes that she played an active role in the fighting, even leading cavalry and wielding a lance. She is compared to the biblical figures Judith, a devout, brave, and beautiful widow, and Jael: God sent this woman with manly virtues, Eustathios affirms, a “manly woman-general” (ἀνδρική αὐτῆ στρατηγός) who surpassed the Amazons and other historical and mythological women in her active role in warfare.<sup>312</sup> She is also compared to the queen of Sheba, who venerated Solomon’s greatness and wisdom—Solomon standing in for Manouel. The orator expresses the hope that she will meet the emperor and be able to pay homage to him.<sup>313</sup> The adulation is all the more fitting because Aldruda was related to Manouel by marriage.<sup>314</sup> As noted by Stone, no other source mentions that Aldruda personally took part in the battle. Accordingly, Eustathios’s claim can probably be taken as hyperbole with no historical basis.<sup>315</sup> At any rate, the vivid description likely pleased and entertained his audience. It was an occasion for the master of rhetors to demonstrate his knowledge of bellicose women in history and mythology, and underlines the extraordinary character of the siege as well as the accomplishment of the emperor.

In the 17th and 18th paragraphs, Eustathios emphasizes how badly the Anconitans made their enemies suffer, commenting that if they had been able to foresee “the horrors” of the 1173 siege during the earlier sieges of Ancona (in 1158 and 1167), they would have destroyed the city then.<sup>316</sup> The reference to the emperor’s foresight and written instructions alludes to the role played by Konstantinos Doukas, *doux* of Dalmatia, as a Byzantine agent during the siege.<sup>317</sup> As Choniates suggests, it was probably he who generously compensated the Anconitans and their allies.

Kinnamos similarly suggests that the successful resistance of Ancona was celebrated at Manouel’s court, even if it did not accomplish much in practice. It did show, however, that despite the failure to forge an alliance with Barbarossa, the alienation of the kingdom of Sicily, and the break with Venice, it was still possible to achieve successes against the Holy Roman Emperor and advance the empire’s interests in Italy. The Anconitans played a vital role in

312 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 49, nn. 225, 226.

313 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 278(82)–279(29).

314 Odo Frangipane had married Eudokia Komnene in ca. 1170. See Carile (1974), p. 24; Magdalino (1993b), p. 84; Zorzi (2012), p. 291.

315 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 50, n. 233.

316 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 53, n. 248.

317 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 279(30)–281(4). See Schreiner (1971); Carile (1974), pp. 22–23; Abulafia (1984), pp. 209–210; Stone (2005), pp. 12–17; Zorzi (2012), p. 289; EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 53, n. 249.

this. Similar to Eustathios's characterization, Aldruda is said to have employed all the resources available to her for the defense of the town and to have been "warmed by zeal" (ζήλω διαθερμανθείσα) for the cause because she happened to maintain "friendship" (φίλιον) for the Byzantines, implying political subordination. Aldruda, having accomplished great deeds as a "general" (στρατηγός), returned to the city, "hailing the great emperor with acclamations of praise" (εὐφήμοις φωναίς βασιλέα μέγαν ἀναβοῶσα).<sup>318</sup> Kinnamos's claim that Aldruda's forces overcame the Venetians in battle is probably encomiastic hyperbole: Venetian sources report that their fleet withdrew because of unfavorable weather and that Christian of Mainz retreated with the land army.<sup>319</sup>

Choniates presents Ancona as one of the cities in Italy whose friendship Manouel particularly sought—an allusion to a quarter in the Byzantine capital (which is attested from 1199)<sup>320</sup> and other privileges granted to the Anconitans.<sup>321</sup> Choniates's account of the siege of Ancona in 1173 presents an example of the effects of Manouel's influence in Italy. The *basileus* is said to have sent an embassy whose task was "either to attract to the friendship of the emperor some whom they [Westerners] call liege men or [to undertake] some other beneficial thing for the Romans" (εἴτε τὸ εἰς φιλίαν ἐκείνου ἐλκύσαι τιναὶς ἦν, οὗς λιζίους φασίν, εἴτε τι ἔτερον Ῥωμαίοις ὠφέλιμον).<sup>322</sup> The Anconitans proved to be reliable opponents of Barbarossa, refusing to hand over the Byzantine envoys despite the German ruler's threats. The strong praise of the city's defenders suggests an account inspired by encomiastic sources such as Eustathios's oration. However, the more critical Choniates recounts that when the defenders ran short of provisions, they requested that the Byzantine emperor cover all costs of the war.<sup>323</sup>

A "certain count Gilielmos" (William of Marchisella)<sup>324</sup> and Aldruda ("a woman of the well-born") raised the siege with ease, according to Choniates, the

318 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 288(19)–289(13).

319 Stone (2005), p. 11.

320 Pertusi (1980); Zorzi (2012), pp. 291–292.

321 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 199(59)–200(69). Lilie (1984a), pp. 441–442, suspects that Michael Palaiologos reached an official agreement with Ancona when he was there during the Italian war in the autumn of 1155.

322 For this passage, see also Zorzi (2012), p. 289.

323 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 201(10)–202(34). On the famine among the besieged, see also Zorzi (2012), p. 290.

324 He was greatly honored by Manouel when he visited Constantinople after the victory. No surviving Greek source speaks of this visit, however, possibly because Count William and his visit were not deemed consequential enough. See Abulafia (1984), pp. 213–214; Zorzi (2012), p. 291.

countess employing the troops she had inherited from her husband. Contrary to Kinnamos's account, which, in accordance with Western sources, states that the countess had become a widow long ago (πάλαι), Choniates alleges that her husband had died "not long ago" (ὄυ πρὸ πολλοῦ).<sup>325</sup> This reflects the fact that the *Historia* was written many years after the event and that Choniates was probably indifferent to this detail anyway.

In any case, Choniates's main concern appears to have been to show that this emperor's policy of containment in Italy had been successful and prudent, especially in light of the many calamities in store for Byzantium after his death.<sup>326</sup>

As in Kinnamos and, especially, Eustathios, the *Historia's* account of the emperor's reaction to the victory at Ancona appears to reflect Manouel's concern to have his nominally universal rule confirmed and therefore his prestige enhanced in the West and the crusader polities,<sup>327</sup> notably by the pope, and to strengthen the defense and security of the lands under direct imperial control:

The emperor fittingly rejoiced in this, rewarded the Anconitans with eulogies of what had happened and admitted them as fellow citizens to the people of the Romans, promising to grant them everything which was above reproach and possible for him as well as appropriate for them to ask. However, he also sent gold in a quantity which exceeded that.<sup>328</sup>

The subordination of the Anconitans, residents of a city, to imperial authority is expressed in terms of *isopoliteia* (equal citizenship) rather than the status of *lizios* (liegeman) applied to Western nobles.<sup>329</sup> The reference to ample compensation for the efforts of the Anconitans, William of Marchisella, and Aldruda of Bertinoro reveals that the inhabitants, as well as their Italian allies, were not as selfless and instinctively loyal to the emperor as the encomiastic

325 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 202(34–40). See EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 48, n. 222.

326 See above, p. 131.

327 Prominent examples of Manouel's "universalism" from the second half of his reign include the famous synodal edict of 1166 and EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, pp. 262(50)–265(77), 268(49–56). See also EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, p. 28, n. 145; Magdalino (1993b).

328 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 202(40–44): "βασιλεὺς δ' ἐπὶ τούτοις ὅσα εἰκὸς εὐφρανθεὶς τοὺς τε Ἀγκωνίτας ἐπαίνους τῶν γεγονότων ἀμείβεται καὶ τοῖς ἰσοπολίταις τῷ γένει Ῥωμαίων ἐγκρίνας ἅπαντα ὑπισχνεῖται παρέξειν, ὅσα οἱ ἀμεμφῆ τε καὶ δυνατὰ κάκείνους δέον αἰτεῖν. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ χρυσίον πολλαπλάσιον πέπομφε."

329 See the discussion in Lamma (1968), p. 389, n. 1.

accounts suggest.<sup>330</sup> As a historian who displays a critical attitude toward Manouel's rule, Choniates is more explicit about this. He states that the Anconitans "seemed to be loyal by nature" (φύσει τὸ πιστὸν ἔχειν δόξαντες) and that they preferred the emperor of the Romans to the king of the "Alamanni" (Germans), notwithstanding that the former were from farther away.<sup>331</sup> Having echoed the encomiastic accounts, not without cynicism, he adds:

However, a different, unflattering response to these [occurrences] would be that the Anconitans, unable to resist profit, living by begging as vagabonds and stretching out their hand to take, rebelled against the one of yesterday and the day before who was their appointed ruler [the German ruler], but hereafter went over to another, who incited their greed and favored that [which is] cunning and knavish in the mind.<sup>332</sup>

The passage, characteristic of Byzantine literature, expresses contempt for the business of trade and associates it with negative themes. Ancona was, after all, a commercial power like Venice, and this portrayal resembles those of Venice.<sup>333</sup> Besides reflecting a common attitude displayed in Byzantine literature, the statement stresses that the defenders of Ancona profited from Byzantine financial support and probably regarded collaboration with the *basileus* as the more profitable option, just as the emperor in turn saw that supporting the city could harm Venice, Romania's enemy and Ancona's rival at the time.<sup>334</sup> Common interests brought the emperor and his allies together, so the devotion to Manouel may be nothing but imperial panegyric, yet the portrayal still indicates common markers of identity and proximity with the West.

330 The evidence is unambiguous: see Zorzi (2012), pp. 290–291.

331 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 202(45)–203(52).

332 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 203(52–57): εἴη δ' ἂν ἕτερον τούτοις οὐκ ἀρεσκόμενον ἀνθυπενεγκεῖν, ὡς ἤττονες ὄντες κέρδους οἱ Ἀγκωνῖται καὶ ἀγυρτεύοντες καὶ πρὸς τὸ λαβεῖν χεῖρα προτείνοντες ἀπέστησαν μὲν τοῦ χθές τε καὶ πρώην ἐς ἡγεμόνα σφῶν ἀποτεταγμένου, ὀπίσω δ' ἐπορεύθησαν ἄλλου, ὃς ἤνεγκεν αὐτοῖς τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ τὸ κερδαλέον καὶ κάπηλον ἐθεράπευσε τοῦ φρονήματος.

333 See Zorzi (2012), p. 292, and the first section of this chapter.

334 Abulafia (1984), pp. 212–213; Stone (2005), p. 9.

## Compatibility, Superiority, and Introspection Reflected in Empresses

The five emperors who ruled between 1118 and 1195 were, during their reigns, exclusively married to women of Latin origin. This and numerous other marriage alliances with Western powers during the long twelfth century reflect the growing importance of relations with the West and indicate a rapprochement, compared to earlier centuries when the West did not play a prominent role in Byzantium and its external relations. However, Greek literature continued to adhere to a standpoint of Byzantine superiority, according to which it did not consider these unions as alliances between equals.<sup>1</sup> Historiography has little to say about the women in question, especially concerning their cultural background. Empresses, like other imperial women, mostly remain in the background in historiographical works, regardless of origin, with the exception of Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*.<sup>2</sup> Byzantine concepts of ideal women and their roles in society often prevented descriptions of gender transgressions, practices that deviated from that ideal. Men continued to occupy a dominant place in Byzantine historiography and politics, even though some empresses and female relatives of emperors exercised considerable influence on political decisions too, though often it remains hidden in the sources. This influence was notable in the cases of Maria of Alania, Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.<sup>3</sup> Euphrosyne (1195–1203), whose unconventional role seems to have particularly irritated Choniates,<sup>4</sup> and Maria-Xene of Antioch, regent for her son Alexios II (1180–82),

1 For a general discussion of Komnenian marriage alliances with Western dynasties, see Macrides (1992); Tinnefeld (1993); Schreiner (2011b), esp. pp. 757–771.

2 See Hill (1997), pp. 90–92; Smythe (1997a) and the studies cited in Ch. 1, p. 48.

3 Garland (1988, 1994); James (1997); Smythe (1997a), esp. p. 152; Hill (1997); (1999), esp. pp. 87, 93–94; Gouma-Peterson (2000b); Reinsch (2000); Papaioannou (2010); Herrin (2013), esp. chs. 2 and 7; Neil and Garland (2013); Grünbart (2016a); Garland (2017); Constantinou and Meyer (2019); Franchi (2019); M. Jeffreys (2019); Neville (2019a). Hill (1999), p. 87, succinctly states: “the ideal wife was not supposed to take any part in politics.” And *ibid.*, p. 94: “Not only was a political role not suitable for an epitaph, and therefore remained unmentioned, but the historians ignored such influence if they could.”

4 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 21, n. 47 (p. 449); Garland (1997); Hill (1997), esp. pp. 92–93; Hill (1999), pp. 204–207.

were also politically powerful. In addition, the influential Psellos does seem to have contributed to a more active role for women as literary patrons and the circumstances that brought about Anna's *Alexiad*.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, the generic tendency of Byzantine literary portrayals of other peoples extended to empresses of Latin origin and their cultural background.<sup>6</sup> They were expected to conform to Byzantine standards, without exception. While a Western bride's people would be characterized as inferior and barbaric, a bride could be accepted as worthy if she was willing to conform to the expectations of the court and aristocratic circles. The case of brides and grooms born abroad illustrates that the barbaric attributes could be overcome by conforming to superior Byzantine norms, and Westerners already possessed identity markers such as Christianity, prowess and nobility of birth which facilitated this adaptation that the imperial government continuously favored.<sup>7</sup> An expression of this stance of Byzantine cultural and political superiority was the practice of assigning customary imperial names to Latin brides and bridegrooms when they joined the imperial family. This unequal relationship also became apparent when Byzantine women married into Western dynasties, retained their Greek names and were regarded as enhancing the status and fame of their husbands.<sup>8</sup> Most of the Latin brides were children or adolescents when they came to the capital, where they were taught Greek and court customs. Their instruction may possibly have begun before they came to Byzantium.<sup>9</sup> This does not mean that their origins, politically or culturally, did not matter. The marriage alliances were ideologically employed as a confirmation of Byzantine ecumenical ideology in the West. These empresses, moreover, were accepted as authentic Christians, which was an important factor of the marriage alliances. This also means that they were not newly baptized—although there was a ritual to accommodate them in the Byzantine Church which could be misinterpreted as a renewal of baptism.<sup>10</sup>

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5 See Papaioannou (2010) and the studies cited in n. 2 and Ch. 1, p. 48.

6 For the generic tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

7 Stouraitis (2014), pp. 181–182.

8 Thoma (1985), pp. 189–191.

9 Hilsdale (2005), p. 476.

10 Thoma (1985), pp. 188–189; Gentile Messina (2008), p. 11 (incl. nn. 47–48 with further references); Neocleous (2019), pp. 58–69, 81–84, concluding that, while moderate Byzantine clerics were satisfied with Latin baptism, rebaptism did occur, but was uncommon and a more limited ritual than the complete rebaptism of heretics.

## 1 Alliance with Οὐγγρία (Hungary): Eirene (Piroska) and Maria (Margaret)

The political importance of the kingdom of Hungary as a main neighbor of Byzantium in the twelfth century was reflected in the marriages of two emperors to Hungarian princesses—Ioannes II, in ca. 1105, and Isaakios II, in late 1185 or early 1186<sup>11</sup>—although historiographers have less to say about these marriage alliances than about those of other twelfth-century emperors.

### 1.1 *The Exploitation of Eirene's (Piroska's) Origin in the Service of Imperial Propaganda*

Anna Komnene does not mention the wife of Ioannes II, Eirene-Piroska,<sup>12</sup> who may have come to reside in Romania as early as 1100.<sup>13</sup> This may be due to her attitude toward her brother, who receives little (explicit) attention in the *Alexiad*. Anna, however, does not vilify the marriage as barbaric, which she does in the case of the betrothal of Robert Guiscard's daughter Olympias to Konstantinos Doukas, who was later to be Anna's fiancé. It would have reflected badly on Alexios and she was, after all, composing her historical work under Ioannes and Manouel, Eirene-Piroska's husband and son. Anna does record, however, the birth of Ioannes's first two children: the heir apparent, Alexios, and a daughter named Maria.<sup>14</sup> Anna's most obvious reason for mentioning these events was that they created another obstacle to her ambition to make her husband emperor and rule beside him. There is an indirect reference to the marriage connection in Anna's account of the conclusion of the treaty of Deabolis (1108), where she names "the envoys coming from the Dacians [Hungarians], [sent] by the king and joint father-in-law of the imperial dignity [i.e., Eirene-Piroska's foster father, Coloman]."<sup>15</sup> Zonaras speaks of Eirene-Piroska as "a daughter of the chief of the Hungarians,"<sup>16</sup> but the reference is brief and the casual mention of her seems the result of pure chance.<sup>17</sup>

11 For Byzantine-Hungarian relations during the long twelfth century, see the literature cited in Ch. 13, p. 365, n. 1, esp. Kerbl (1979) for the Byzantine princesses who married into the Hungarian royal dynasty.

12 See Sággy and Ousterhout (2019), with further references.

13 Farkas (2004), p. 367.

14 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.4.4, p. 370(42–46).

15 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.12.28, p. 423(45–46): "οἱ ἐκ τῶν Δακῶν ἤκοντες ἀποκρισιάριοι παρὰ τοῦ κράλη καὶ συμπενθέρου τῆς βασιλείας."

16 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Büttner-Wobst, p. 748(2): "τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Οὐγγρων ἀρχηγοῦ θυγάτηρ."

17 For Zonaras's brief treatment of Alexios I's reign, see Ch. 1, p. 55.

Kinnamos limits himself to a single reference and Choniates to an allusion. The former mentions Eirene in the context of a summary of Byzantine-Hungarian relations under Ioannes II, stating that when Almos (d. 1127), the “child” (rather than the nephew)<sup>18</sup> of King Ladislaus I (1077–95), was forced to flee to Constantinople during a war for the Hungarian crown in the 1120s, the emperor received him favorably as he was married to his cousin (that is, his sister according to Kinnamos).<sup>19</sup> She is praised as “a very chaste woman if ever there was one, who in the highest degree attained virtue.” Kinnamos also stresses her modesty and generosity, and presents the foundation of the beautiful Pantokrator monastery as an example of her ideal piety.<sup>20</sup> Her imperial husband and collaborator also gave her credit for this foundation, expressing great affection.<sup>21</sup> The description remains entirely within the register of female imperial attributes that appear in the encomia of the time.<sup>22</sup> Kinnamos had every reason to praise her for the evident reason that she was the mother of the history’s central figure: lauding her virtues reflected positively on Manouel.

A single allusion to Eirene-Piroska in Choniates’s historical work occurs in his statement that when Hungarian troops attacked the empire under Ioannes II in the late 1120s (i.e., during the empress’s lifetime) and destroyed several cities, they also “shook off and dispersed the earlier [ties] of friendship and concord then.”<sup>23</sup> The term “friendship” (*filia*) does not, of course, denote an alliance of equals, but one between the supreme head of the ecumene—the emperor—and an inferior party, in this case the Hungarian royal family.<sup>24</sup> A possible motivation to conclude the marriage alliance with Coloman of Hungary, who acted as a protector for the orphan Piroska, was to win him over as an ally, thereby preventing him from joining the Norman ruler Bohemond against Byzantium. This connection is not, however, directly addressed by any

18 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 17, n. 9, p. 235. The exact nature of the kinship between Ladislaus and Almos was most probably a matter of indifference to Kinnamos, which would be characteristic of the lack of interest displayed by historiographers of the middle period in non-Byzantine dynasties for their own sake. On Almos’s escape to Byzantium, see also Makk (1989), p. 22.

19 See also Makk (1989), pp. 22–24.

20 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 9(22)–10(8); p. 10(1–2): “σωφρονεστάτην τε εἶπερ τινὰ καὶ ἀρετῆς ἐς τὰ μάλιστα μεταποιουμένην.” On the Pantokrator monastery, see Kotzabassi (2013), esp. the contribution by Marina Loukaki.

21 PANTOKRATOR ΤΥΠΙΚΟΝ, pp. 18–22, M. Jeffreys (2019), p. 110.

22 On characteristics ascribed to the ideal imperial woman, see Gentile Messina (2008), p. 13, n. 59.

23 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 17(41–42): “τὰς ἐπὶ φιλίᾳ τῇ πρότερον ὁμολογίας ἀποσεισάμενοι τε καὶ διαξάναντες.”

24 Zorzi (2012), p. 40, with further examples.



Byzantine source.<sup>25</sup> A law issued ca. 1105 and recorded in the *Ecloga Basilicorum* might allude to it by stating that, in time of great need, the emperor may be obliged to marry his son to the daughter of a warring people's ruler.<sup>26</sup>

Above all, therefore, the Greek sources describe Eirene-Piroska in traditional roles of a Byzantine empress, notably as a religious benefactress. An entry in a synaxarium amounts to a short biography of Eirene, presumably intended to strengthen her pious reputation by praising her saintly virtues and to commemorate her as a benefactress of the Pantokrator monastery.<sup>27</sup> It also relates the circumstances of her death, as do two poems by Prodromos. These references establish that she died on 13 August 1134, when accompanying Ioannes on a campaign. Nikolaos Kallikles also wrote a few verses on the occasion of the empress's passing, emphasizing her fame for piety and that some of her children were not yet adults, but there is no reference or allusion to anything connected with her origin.<sup>28</sup> Her depiction in the famous Hagia Sophia mosaic also chiefly represents her as an ideally beautiful empress, even though her hairstyle has been attributed to her Hungarian origin.<sup>29</sup>

The poems by Prodromos are of particular interest. In them, the empress's Hungarian origin does play a role. She is referred to as an "empress from the Western peoples."<sup>30</sup> As is the case with other empresses, whether of Western or non-Western origin,<sup>31</sup> she is congratulated for her noble birth and feminine imperial virtues, which are frequently mentioned in numerous literary works.<sup>32</sup> Her immense good fortune in being united with the emperor and joining the imperial family is emphasized, implying that no one can be on a par with the *basileus* and that, moreover, no outside element can add prestige to the supreme Roman imperial family. This concept seems present in an invitation to Eirene-Piroska to forget her people, family, and background, strongly resembling Psalm 44/45(11–12):

25 Makk (1989), p. 14; Stephenson (2000), pp. 180–181, 199; Bárány (2019).

26 *ECLOGA BASILICORUM*, no. B.2.3.162 = D.50.17.162, p. 147; Stephenson (2000), pp. 283–284.

27 Edition in Kotzabassi (2013), pp. 170–175; see also Sággy and Ousterhout (2019), Appendix 1, pp. 327–31.

28 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 7, pp. 229–232, no. 8, p. 234(11–20); NIKOLAOS KALLIKLES, *Poems*, no. 28, p. 106.

29 Mielke (2019), pp. 154–156.

30 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 1, p. 179(57): "βασιλις ἑθνῶν τῶν ἐσπερίων."

31 Other empresses of Latin origin are also praised for their noble families: see below.

32 See THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 1, p. 179(78), praising the "revered quality" of her family and the "glory of the father" (τὰ σεμνὰ τοῦ γένους σου καὶ τὴν πατρῶων δόξαν).

Lose thought of the rule of the father, your people, your family  
 As you shall have the emperor of the Romans, Ioannes,  
 Desiring your beauty, and you shall have a marriage,  
 A marriage above all human striving.<sup>33</sup>

The concept of Roman ecumenical rule is supported by references to the empress's Western origin. She is addressed as "lady of all the peoples in the West, through the father, through the mother, in accordance with kinship." This is followed by an enumeration of Western peoples who look up to her. While some of the employed ethnonyms, which occur in ancient literature, can be associated with contemporary peoples, others are less clear, and they often overlap. "Kelts" and "Germans" may point to French, Normans, English, or Varangians; "Alamanni," "the people of the king from the Rhine" to Germans; "Gauls" and "Galatians" to inhabitants of France; "Diocleans" to those of Zeta; and "Dacians" to Hungarians or possibly Serbs. "Perrhaebians" designate a Slavic people and "Dalmatians" Serbs. The poet further names "Lombards," "Genoese" and "Calabrians," "Africans," "Sicilians" (Normans among others), "Pyrrhenians" (people from the Pyrenees), "Ligurians," "Huns" (Hungarians), "Panonnians" (Hungarians again), and, finally, the inhabitants of the Britannic islands. As for the "Deucrians," they may denote Teucrians (i.e., Trojans); by this name, Prodromos might allude to Westerners in general and the well-known story of the establishment of the rule of Aeneas as a precursor to the Roman Empire in Italy.<sup>34</sup>

In any case, the many and imprecise ethnonyms are meant rhetorically to reinforce the concept of the vast dominion to which imperial ideology lays

33 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 1, pp. 178(52)–179(55): "ἀρχῆς πατρώας, σοῦ λαοῦ, σοῦ γένους ἐπιλάθου, | ὅπως τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Ῥωμαίων Ἰωάννην | σοῦ κάλλους ἐπιθυμητὴν ἕξις καὶ τύχης γάμων, | γάμων τῶν ὑπὲρ ἔφεσιν πάσαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην." For the application of the same concept to Maria-Margaret, Eirene-Bertha, and Anna-Agnes, see below, pp. 147, 153 and 169–170.

34 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 1, pp. 179(85)–180(99); see p. 179(85–86): "κυρία πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἐσπέρας ἀπὸ πατρός, ἀπὸ μητρός, ἐκ τῶν ἀγγιστευμάτων." See Hörandner's commentary as well as the critical apparatus (pp. 179–180, 183–184). Similarly, Eirene-Piroska is mentioned as "ruler of the whole Western population" (ἄνασσα δυσμικοῦ παντὸς γένους) in the poem written for the occasion of Ioannes II's death, where she is also congratulated on her fertility (no. 25, p. 338[95–99]). Concerning the establishment of Aeneas's rule in Italy as the foundation of the future Roman, see, e.g., the fragments of the first book of CASSIUS DIO, *Roman History*, ed. and trans. Cary (1914), pp. 2–12, or the historical works of Prodromos's own time: KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Hist.*, pp. 81(1475)–85(1565); IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, ed. Dindorf, vol. 2, pp. 85(6)–87(21), 200(21).

claim. Furthermore, the poet demonstrates his erudition by citing names that feature in the works of antiquity familiar to Byzantine literati. Whether this passage can be considered an allusion to the fact that the empress was a granddaughter of Rudolf of Rheinfelden, anti-king against Henry IV from 1077–80 and so having a claim to eventual elevation to imperial rank in the West, cannot be excluded. However, the main point seems to be, as stated by Hörandner, that the connection with a princess from a Western dynasty amounts to the renewed recognition of the empire's dominion in the West. Prodrornos's funerary poem follows a similar direction, claiming that she descended from the Julio-Claudian dynasty. This might refer to a Hungarian tradition, even if it is applied to other ladies from Western dynasties in Byzantine literature.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, Xene, the name that Eirene-Piroska is said to have adopted as a nun in contemplation of death, means “stranger” among other things. The name Eirene (i.e., peace) was possibly chosen in the expectation that a union between Alexios I's designated successor and a Hungarian princess would ensure a lasting peace between the empire and the kingdom of Hungary.<sup>36</sup> However, both names were customary in the family of Piroska's husband, which is crucial in the context of the importance of dynastic prestige and continuity for Komenian rule. In Piroska's case, the intention may have been to honor Eirene Doukaina—by naming her daughter-in-law after her—as well as her husband's grandmother Anna Dalassene, who had adopted Xene as her monastic name.<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, both decisions might have nothing to do with Piroska's origin. Caution is advised when arguing such influences, not just in this case.

35 See Hörandner's commentary in THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, pp. 183–184, *ibid.*, no. 7, p. 229(6), with commentary: *ibid.*, p. 231; and MICHAEL OF ANCHIALOS, *Inaugural Lecture*, p. 202(533). See also Hörandner (1994), p. 123, who argues that the early Hungarian title *gyula* (Julius) was derived from the toponym Alba Iulia and based on a myth. Interestingly, Manasses claims the same descent for Melisende of Tripolis; he might have borrowed the idea from Prodrornos's poems. See KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Ἵδοιπορικόν*, p. 182(184–186): “[Melisende was] incomparably well-bred, from noble stock | for she sprung from the Julian caesars | who bore the sceptres in the regions of the West” (παίδευσις ἀσύγκριτος, εὐγενές γένος | ἐξ αἵματος γὰρ Καισάρων Ἰουλίων | σκηπτροκρατούντων τῶν μερῶν τῆς ἐσπέρας). The same claim is made by an anonymous poet with regards to Eirene-Bertha, and by Choniates with regards to Maria-Margaret and (indirectly) Maria-Xene: see below, pp. 146, 154 and 164–165.

36 Cf., e.g., Moravcsik (1923), p. 71.

37 Garland (1999), pp. 6, 199, 205.

### 1.2 *The Similar Case of Maria (Margaret)*

Even less extensive is the portrayal of Maria-Margaret, another Hungarian princess, who was only ten years old when she was married to Emperor Isaakios II Angelos. In the description of the period before 1204, she is mentioned by Choniates on the occasion of the marriage itself, where he notes her tender age. It was not unusual for women to move to Romania at a young age in order to be prepared for their role as members of the imperial family.<sup>38</sup> A parallel case is that of Agnes of France, Alexios II's bride. The wife of Ioannes II and the second wife of Manouel I were only a few years older when they came to Byzantium. Maria-Margaret plays a role in Choniates's wedding oration (*ἐπιθάλμιος*), composed in late 1185 or early 1186. The oration brings up the topos of Julio-Claudian ancestry (also attributed to Eirene-Piroska), which possibly had a Hungarian background but, at any rate, was adopted for the purposes of court rhetoric in order to confirm and reinforce Byzantine superiority.<sup>39</sup> It was therefore no contradiction for Choniates to include the "Paionian"—i.e., the Hungarian king—in the list of hostile (barbarian) rulers supposedly defeated or at least put in their place by his imperial master, shortly before praising his bride.<sup>40</sup>

The young Maria is compared in beauty to her namesake, the second wife of Manouel I, and her kinship mentioned (through her mother, Agnes of Châtillon, who was Maria-Xene's half-sister).<sup>41</sup> This comparison is revealing in several respects. First, it points to the esteem in Byzantium for the appearance of Westerners, Maria's aunt in particular; and secondly, it is an indicator of Isaakios II's policies of imitating, associating with, and comparing himself to the famous Manouel. That Margaret of Hungary adopted Maria-Xene's imperial name was therefore hardly chance, but rather may have followed a Hungarian precedent, and it was plausibly in honor of her aunt.<sup>42</sup> Like Manouel, Isaakios

38 See the introduction to this chapter.

39 See above.

40 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 5, p. 39(26): "the Paionian surrenders" (*ὑποπίπτει δ' ὁ Παίων*). On this, see also Berkes (2011), p. 363. On the similar case of Eirene-Bertha of Sulzbach's portrayal by Basileios of Achrída, see section 2 of this chapter.

41 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 5, pp. 36(17), 40(17–25).

42 Brand (1968), pp. 80, 190; Harris (2014), p. 140. Isaakios II's emulation of Manouel extended to renewed privileges for Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, as well as marriage alliances with Hungary in 1185/86, Montferrat in 1187, and Sicily in 1193. Other indicators are the naming of Isaakios's purple-born son, Manouel, and imperial encomia with many parallels to the characterization of Manouel I. See Brand (1968), p. 97; Magdalino (1993b), p. 482 ("[Isaakios was] patently imitating Manuel's style of government"); Angold (1997), p. 311.

and his advisers hoped to gain from the agreements and kinship with Bela. This is apparent in a letter to Pope Celestine III composed in 1193, which raises the conflict regarding claims to Serbia. Isaakios mentions the oaths regarding Serbia that the Hungarian king had sworn to Manouel and himself upon the occasion of his marriage to Bela's daughter, who is referred to as "my much-beloved augousta" (περιπόθητός μου αὐγούστα).<sup>43</sup>

The content and vocabulary of the following passage in the wedding oration are strikingly similar to the address to Eirene-Piroska in Prodromos's poem:

She is also the most beautiful because she stepped to your right and you were desiring her beauty, which is why she inclined her ear to being united with you like the daughter of whom David sings that she forgot her own people and left the house of her father.<sup>44</sup>

Present here is also the idea that the bride's people and family were insignificant barbarians because they neither conformed to the cultural standards of the upper segments of the *Rōmaioi* nor presided over the ecumene in New Rome. While no other family, let alone one from a different realm, could compare to the imperial dynasty, a non-Byzantine bride, nonetheless, could be in possession of noble ancestry and virtues that made her worthy of the emperor. This seeming contradiction probably did not occur to a contemporary audience of imperial encomia. The approach had two parallel goals: first to make the bride appear worthy of the emperor's hand in marriage and to praise her people and family, especially their military prowess and noble birth; the second involved establishing all other rulers as insignificant and inferior to the imperial dynasty.

In Choniates's history, Maria-Margaret is not mentioned again until the narrative of events after the death of her husband in February 1204 and the fall of Constantinople in April of the same year. Boniface of Montferrat, who had initially aspired to the imperial throne, conquered Thessalonike, established it as the seat of his kingdom, and married Maria soon after the fall

43 DEMETRIOS TORNIKES, Letters, no. 33, p. 343(6–16). Manouel's characterization in this passage as "emperor of famous memory, well-beloved uncle to my imperial dignity" (ἀοιδίμος βασιλεὺς καὶ περιπόθητος θεὸς τῆς βασιλείας μου) also points to the association of Isaakios II with Manouel's rule.

44 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Orations, no. 5, p. 40(29–32): "καλλίστη δὲ καὶ ὅτι σοι παρέστη ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ τοῦ κάλλους αὐτῆς ἐπεθύμησας, οὐ χάριν καὶ τοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ συζυγῆναί σοι λόγοις τὸ οὐδὲ κλίνασα, καθ' ἣν ἄδει θυγατέρα Δαυιδ τοῦ τε οἰκείου λαοῦ ἐπελάθετο καὶ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς ἀπεδήμησεν." Choniates's words echo Psalm 44/45(11–12). Anna-Agnes is also similarly portrayed: see section 4 of this chapter.

of Constantinople. This is the only instance in the history in which her son Manouel, born in the purple, is brought up. The boy was paraded by Boniface in the hope of winning Byzantine adherents to his cause. Choniates, whose narrative of events after 1204 often argues for a united front against the Latin conquerors, reacting to the heterogeneous attitudes of Byzantines toward the conquerors, criticizes both the welcome his fellow Romans gave Boniface's attempt to deceive them and the attempt by some Byzantine aristocrats to profit from Boniface's advances in Hellas and the Peloponnese by assisting the marquess's pretext of supporting young Manouel's cause.<sup>45</sup> With her husband absent, Maria, despite being a former empress, could not prevent the inhabitants of Thessalonike from rebelling and had to retreat to the acropolis.<sup>46</sup>

## 2 Eirene (Bertha of Sulzbach) as an Exception to the Rule of Easy Integration

Bertha of Sulzbach, known as Eirene in Byzantium,<sup>47</sup> plays a minor role in the histories but is still more prominent than most empresses of Latin origin and many Westerners. This is largely due to her significance for Ioannes II's and Manouel I's alliance with King Conrad III and the attempted alliance with Conrad's successor, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick, and results from Kinnamos and Choniates covering her husband's reign in more detail than that of Ioannes II. In addition, she figures in a number of encomia and other sources, notably a funerary oration composed by Basileios of Achrída (1160).<sup>48</sup> With the exception of Choniates's *Historia*, her portrayal was first and foremost meant to flatter the image of the emperor.

Imperial encomia, as well as Kinnamos who was an encomiast in a historiographic format, praise qualities often attributed to empresses and exemplary women: piety, humility, beauty, charity, mercy, and nobility of birth.<sup>49</sup> Choniates

45 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 598(3)–599(28), 601(65–72). See also Ch. 14, p. 388.

46 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 619(46–50).

47 For the custom of renaming men and women who married into the imperial family and came to reside in Byzantium, see the beginning of this chapter, p. 140.

48 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*.

49 See Todt (1988), p. 134; Gentile Messina (1996), pp. 266–267; Hill (1999), pp. 72–95; THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 20, p. 321(33); BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 92(80–82), 98(155–159), 120(475–480), applauding Eirene for surpassing all other imperial women in virtue and being among women what Manouel was among men, especially p. 120(480): “You, however, have excelled all, both those who were born here and those from abroad” (σὺ δὲ πασῶν, τῶν τε αὐθιγενῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπηλύδων, ὑπέρκεισαι). Nevertheless, he stresses her background elsewhere: pp. 94(90–91, 95–96),

refers to Eirene's noble family, alluding to her descent from Count Berengar of Sulzbach (d. 1125), an important adviser to the Salian emperor Henry v and father of the Staufer Conrad 111's wife.<sup>50</sup> Kinnamos speaks of her "propriety of character" (ἡθῶν κοσμιότης) and "spiritual virtues" (ψυχικαὶ ἀρεταί).<sup>51</sup> When he narrates her death, he praises her as "a woman who, as was previously stated by me, greatly exceeded others at that time in prudence, propriety, and mercy towards those in need."<sup>52</sup> Imperial orations often express an appreciation of her piety and charitable works. The epitaph by Basileios of Achrida stresses her "accessible, discreet manners" (ἡ μεθ' ὑποστολῆς εὐήκοος ἔντευξις), to which further virtues are added: piety (εὐλάβεια), physical and spiritual beauty (ἡ καλὴ ἐν γυναιξίν, σέβας), a majestic and dignified demeanor (σέβας, τιμὴ), prudence (μεθ' ὑποστολῆς), wisdom (ἔμφυτος κοσμιότης), philanthropy or "good works" (καλὰ ἔργα), and others.<sup>53</sup> Such praise is certainly generic.<sup>54</sup> It may also reflect efforts on Eirene's part, since charitable works befitted an empress, enhanced her reputation, and could even lead to a reputation for saintliness, as in the case of Eirene-Piroska. Encomiasts, while making ample use of exaggerations, reinterpretations, and omissions to fulfill their agenda,<sup>55</sup> did work with events they and their contemporaries had witnessed.

Besides acting as benefactress to the poor, monasteries, and the clergy,<sup>56</sup> Eirene also became a literary patron, as evidenced by Ioannes Tzetzes's writings.

110(326–327). An anonymous poem and a monody by Ioannes Doukas also attribute such qualities to Eirene-Bertha. See Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 14–15.

50 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 53(58–59): "from a family of [princes who were] in good repute and most illustrious" (γένους τῶν ἐπὶ δόξης καὶ πάνυ λαμπρῶν). See the history's earlier version, which describes her as "from a family of [princes] in good repute and near the most illustrious thrones of the rulers" (γένους τῶν ἐπὶ δόξης καὶ πάνυ λαμπρῶν θρόνων τῶν ἀρχικῶν), and Maisano's reading (ed. Maisano [1994], p. 124[2]): "from a famous and most illustrious family" (γένους τῶν ἐπιδόξων καὶ πάνυ λαμπροῦ). See also Todt (1988), p. 120.

51 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 36(1–4).

52 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 202(6–10): "γυναικὶ ἐπὶ σωφροσύνη, ὥσπερ εἴρηται μοι καὶ πρότερον, καὶ κοσμιότητι καὶ οἴκτῳ τῷ πρὸς τοὺς δεομένους πολλῷ τὰς κατ' ἐκείνον ὑπερβαλλούσῃ τὸν χρόνον." Her death is mentioned also on p. 208(17–19), where Kinnamos relates how Manouel found a new wife.

53 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, pp. 90(39–41), 92(59)–94(106), 104(248)–106(276), 108(300–317), 110(341–359). See also Todt (1988), p. 134; Gentile Messina (1996), pp. 265–266.

54 Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 65–67.

55 See Ch. 1, pp. 60–61, and the blunt and likely representative statement to that effect in EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 12(32)–14(4). It resembles that made by Euthymios Malakes in an oration of 1161. Both are in line with Menander Rhetor: see Magdalino (1993b), pp. 415–416, 479.

56 For further evidence for Eirene's generosity with regards to the Church, see Gentile Messina (2008), p. 27.

Tzetzes was chosen to introduce the empress to Greek literary culture, specifically Homer. His allegories on the *Iliad* show that he did so with didactic care. However, his position ended prematurely with disagreements over salary. The motivation of the empress's patronage may have been to conform to her social sphere and, perhaps, to imitate her namesake, the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene. Although the empress probably shared with her a non-Byzantine background and the patronage of Tzetzes, there is every indication that she was less interested in patronage and less generous toward literati, in line with Choniates's assessment that the empress failed to fit into her social environment.<sup>57</sup>

There is no evidence that Eirene-Bertha compensated for disapproving attitudes towards her cultural background at court by acting as a literary patron.<sup>58</sup> Her lack of influence on aristocratic circles probably resulted from the lack of a power base that a bride from a Byzantine clan would have been able to count on, as well as her inability to exert influence on her husband. Her poor social reception was not because of her background, but because she failed to conform sufficiently to expectations. All other empresses of Latin origin, who probably came to Byzantium at a significantly younger age, seem after a time to have had no difficulty in doing so.<sup>59</sup> Tzetzes expressed disapproval of the empress in a letter to a friend, stating that it hardly befitted an empress to accompany the *basileus* on a military campaign. This criticism resembles that directed towards Eirene Doukaina, who accompanied her husband Alexios on campaigns—whether it was because he mistrusted her is unclear. However, Tzetzes's censure does not seem to relate to Eirene-Bertha's Western origin either.<sup>60</sup>

Kinnamos refers to a bad omen when Eirene arrived in Constantinople, not for herself and Manouel but rather for the wife of her betrothed's brother Alexios, who, as the eldest son of Emperor Ioannes, was the heir apparent.<sup>61</sup>

57 Todt (1988), pp. 134–135; Irmscher (1996a); pp. 285–286; Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 26–27; Rhoby (2010b); Grünbart (2015), p. 179, with further references. For the patronage of the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene, see Rhoby (2009); Jeffreys (2012).

58 As argued by Garland (1999), p. 200.

59 Bertha's exact age at the time of her arrival in Constantinople is unknown, but her parents died in 1125 and 1126. She might well have been close in age to her sister Gertrud, who gave birth to a son in 1137. Bertha was accordingly at least 16–17 in 1142, but it is probable that she was over 20, possibly around Manouel's age. See Blum (1999). For her failure to live up to expectations like other empresses from abroad, see Todt (1988), pp. 131–132; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 125, n. 42 (p. 558); Gentile Messina (1996), p. 277; Zorzi (2012), p. 100.

60 Shepard (1979); Smythe (1997a), pp. 161–162; Hill (1999), pp. 84–85, 94.

61 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 36(4–12).



The story involves Eirene noticing Alexios's wife because of her dress, a significant marker of social rank and importance, and mistaking her for a widowed nun, an anecdote that was spread because of the near simultaneity of Alexios's death and Eirene's arrival in the capital.<sup>62</sup>

Choniates alludes both to Eirene's lack of integration but also to the shared identity marker of Christianity and uses her portrayal for his characteristic criticism of Byzantine society. He states that Eirene did not care much for her appearance and rejected cosmetics, unlike other ladies of the court; however, he praises Eirene for this expression of Christian virtue. This corresponds to an ideal of natural beauty at the time, which, however, does not seem to have been achieved without the use of certain cosmetics. The empress did not conform to this ideal according to his description, nor did she try to.<sup>63</sup> An excessive concern for physical beauty could, of course, lead to the mortal sin of vanity according to the teachings of the Church.<sup>64</sup> Alluding to the vanity of court ladies fit Choniates's agenda of identifying causes for the decline and ultimate destruction of the empire.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, it is likely that the empress was not popular among the leading circles of the court due to her failure to

62 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 125, n. 40, pp. 557–558; Hilsdale (2005), p. 470. For the importance of prophetic predictions and omens in Byzantium as well as the West, see Ch. 1, pp. 32–33.

63 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 53(59)–54(64): “She put not as much thought to her physical beauty as she was concerned about the inner [beauty] and the soul. She thus abhorred face powder, eye liner, bodice, and artistic but unnatural rouge. Leaving such things to silly women, she devoted herself to virtues and adorned herself with them” (αὐτὴ μέντοι οὐ τοσοῦτον τοῦ σωματικοῦ κάλλους ἐφρόντιζεν, ὅσον τοῦ ἔνδον καὶ περὶ ψυχὴν ἐπεμέλετο. οὐκοῦν ἐξομνυμένη τὰ ἐκ τῶν κόνεων ἐπιτίμματα καὶ τοὺς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ὑπογραμμοὺς καὶ τὸν πλάστην τὸν κάτωθεν καὶ τὸ τεχνικὸν ἄλλ’ οὐ φυσικὸν ἔρευθος καὶ ταῖς ἄφροσι τῶν γυναικῶν αὐτὰ ἐπιρρίπτουσα ταῖς ἀρεταῖς προσανείχε καὶ ὠραῖζετο). See the similar remarks of BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 108(303–304), who praises her “great devotion and the mortification of the soul, and her contempt for the deceptive, worthless appearances pertaining to sense-perception” (ἡ δὲ πολλὴ τοῦ φρονήματος συστολή καὶ καταστολή, καὶ ἡ τῶν φαινομένων τῇ αἰσθήσει ἀπατηλῶν ὡς εὐτελῶν περιφρόνησις). Michael Italikos and Georgios Tornikes, in accordance with the ideal of the time, equally praise Eirene Doukaina and her daughter Anna for having no need of cosmetics. By contrast with Choniates and as encomiasts, they emphasize that the empress and her daughter were naturally beautiful. This beauty seems to have been achieved by avoiding sunlight, thus retaining a white complexion, and using make-up, especially rouge. See Hill (1999), pp. 90–91; Hatzaki (2009), p. 20.

64 Hill (1999), p. 92.

65 Harris (2000), pp. 29–31; Zorzi (2012), p. 100.

fully conform to their expectations. Therefore, she may have sought to gain the favor of the Church as a form of compensation.<sup>66</sup>

Having no motive to flatter her by the time he engaged in historiography, Choniates censured Eirene-Bertha for stubbornness, a typical trait of the barbarian in Greek literature, one explicitly declared to be characteristic of her people, the Ἀλαμανοί, as they are called in Byzantine sources of the time.<sup>67</sup> According to Choniates, this was the reason for the lukewarm relationship between Eirene and Manouel.<sup>68</sup> Conceivably, she was used to a more direct way of communicating, which could easily be interpreted as inflexibility or stubbornness.<sup>69</sup> However, her lack of attractiveness, hinted at by the historian, possibly caused the emperor to be more interested in other women.<sup>70</sup> In any case, he presents *topoi* that often appear in association with barbarian peoples (*ethnē*);<sup>71</sup> the observations may reflect those of Choniates's (older) informants, who might have known her.

The aforesaid claim that she was from an illustrious dynasty, albeit inferior to Byzantium's ruling dynasty, may have been borrowed from a source employed by Choniates, but likely also reflects the rise of the Staufers that he personally witnessed, at least until Henry VI (d. 1197). Choniates also remembered the time when Frederick Barbarossa, Eirene's relative, was Manouel's main rival in the West and when Byzantines were concerned that Barbarossa would one day invade the empire. It may be for that reason that Basileios portrays Eirene's people as dominant in the West (κρατίστον, ἡγεμονικώτατον, πρῶτιστον, ἀρχικώτατον), and hence worthy of a matrimonial alliance with the imperial family, but also haughty and arrogant (γαῦρον και ἀλαζών).<sup>72</sup> Not portraying

66 Garland (1999), pp. 199–200; Gentile Messina (2008), p. 31. A prayer addressed to the Theotokos in gratitude for Eirene's recovery from an illness was possibly an expression of this effort: see THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 34, p. 371.

67 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 54: "She had, however, the inflexibility characteristic of her people and a stubborn disposition" (εἶχε δὲ τὸ μὴ ἐπικλινῆς ἔθνικὸν και τὸ τῆς γνώμης ἐκέκτητο δυσμετάθετον).

68 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 54(64–74).

69 Todt (1988), p. 132.

70 Besides Choniates's account of Manouel's affairs, particularly with his niece Theodora, there is also an anonymous poem which tells of known and suspected rivals of the empress in this context. See Todt (1988), pp. 133–134; Irmscher (1996a), p. 285.

71 Zorzi (2012), p. 100.

72 See BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 110(326–340): "This stranger and foreigner, originating from another land and an alien resident, and, as it seemed, late to learn the way of life in our republic, she, from a haughty and arrogant people who raised their eyebrows above their forehead, whose sinew of iron, their neck, according to the saying of the divine voice, did not know how to bend, she, from the most important and first among the dynasties of [her] people. For from the myriads of such peoples who from Italy until

Eirene as an exception would have reflected badly on Manouel, although she may have been regarded as modest, at least in certain aspects of her demeanor and character.<sup>73</sup> Of course, however, the rulers of the Germans were classified as vastly inferior to the Roman *basileus*. Basileios alludes to this, but stresses Eirene's personal qualities in order to give the impression that they made up for her inferior origin.<sup>74</sup> Like Prodrornos does for Eirene-Piroska and Eirene-Bertha, and Choniates for Maria-Margaret, Manganeios applies to the empress from Sulzbach the topos of ceasing to think of one's origin when marrying into the imperial dynasty.<sup>75</sup>

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even the ocean dwell in length and width, divided by very many rivers and extremely high mountains, who does not know that the people of the Alamanni rules over the others, but does not bear to be ruled? It is the strongest and the most authoritative people and among those [of the West] the principal and most dominant one, and from there the marriages of rulers originate. And it is well known that the one who a short while ago ruled over the people [Conrad III], attached himself to the older of the sisters, to our emperor [who ruled] then and the father of the emperor [Ioannes II], however, he sent this one out to be attached to and dwell with the most beautiful of his sons" (Ταῦτα ἡ ξένη καὶ ἔπηλος, ἡ ἀλλοδαπή τε καὶ μέτοικος, καὶ τῶν τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς πολιτείας ὡς ἐδόκει ὀψιμαθῆς, ἡ ἐξ ἔθνους γαύρου καὶ ἀλαζόνος, καὶ τὰς ὀφρῦς ὑπὲρ τὸ μέτωπον αἴροντος, οὐ καὶ νεῦρον σιδηροῦν ὁ τράχηλος κατὰ τὴν θείαν φάναι φωνὴν κάμπτεσθαι οὐκ εἰδῶς, ἡ ἐκ γένους τοῦ σεμνοτάτου καὶ πρωτίστου τῶν ἐν ἔθνει. μυρίων γὰρ ὄσων ἔθνῶν τὴν ἐξ Ἰταλίας μέχρι καὶ ὠκεανοῦ νεμομένων κατὰ τε πλάτος καὶ μήκος, ποταμοῖς τε πλείστοις καὶ ὄρεσι τοῖς μεγίστοις διειλημμένων, τίς οὐκ οἶδεν ὅτι τὸ Ἀλαμανῶν ἔθνος ἄρχει μὲν τῶν ἄλλων, ἄρχεσθαι δὲ οὐκ ἀνέχεται; τοιοῦτου δὲ ὄντος τοῦ ἔθνους κρατίστου τε καὶ ἡγεμονικωτάτου καὶ τὸ γένος πρώτιστον ἐν τούτοις καὶ ἀρχικώτατον, καὶ τὰ κήδη ἐντεῦθεν τοῖς γενάρχαις προσάγονται. καὶ δηλοῖ ὁ πρὸ μικροῦ τοῦ ἔθνους κρατῶν, ἑαυτῶ μὲν τὴν πρεσβυτέραν τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀρμοσάμενος, τῷ δὲ ἡμετέρῳ τότε βασιλεῖ καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως πατρὶ ταύτην ἐκπέμψας, τῷ καλλίστῳ τῶν υἱῶν συναρμοσθησομένην καὶ συνοικήσουσαν). See also Gentile Messina (1996), pp. 269–271, (2008), pp. 160–161. For the pairing of ξένος and ἔπηλος, a sort of catchphrase Basileios was familiar with, see Gentile Messina (2008), p. 159. The references to her non-Byzantine origin seem hyperbolic and may also be attributed to her relatively advanced age and corresponding difficulties to adapt to Byzantine expectations when she arrived in Romania.

73 See the subsequent remark, p. 110(341–342): “The empress, however, did not emulate the arrogance of [her] people, but imitated the humility of Christ” (Ἄλλ’ οὐκ ἐζήλωσε τὴν τοῦ ἔθνους ἀγερωχίαν ἢ βασιλῆς, ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ταπεινώσιν ἐμιμήσατο).

74 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, Funerary Oration, p. 94(102–106): “Therefore you did not remain of the same sort as you were when you were received from your [noble] house and family, but adding light to light and rising from honor to honor, you who were great and worthy of greatness, were deemed to be deserving of the greatest thing and the greatest title” (διὸ οὐδὲ ἔμεινας οἴα καὶ ὄση ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου καὶ τῆς σῆς συγγενείας ἀνελαμβάνου, ἀλλὰ φωτὶ προσλαμβάνουσα φῶς καὶ ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν ἀναβαίνουσα, ἡ μεγάλη καὶ τῶν μεγάλων ἀξία τοῦ μεγίστου κατηξιώθης καὶ πράγματος καὶ ὀνόματος).

75 MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, Poems, no. 29(65–74), forthcoming (quoted with the kind permission of the editors). For the application of the same topos to Eirene-Piroska, Maria-Margaret, and Anna-Agnes, see pp. 143–144, 147 and 169–170.

Other encomia referring to the empress also represent the imperial dynasty as superior to all Western ruling houses. This is notable in a historical poem of Theodoros Prodromos. It greets Eirene-Bertha upon the occasion of her arrival in Constantinople, where she was to marry Manouel, who was not at the time expected to become emperor. Prodromos uses the occasion to argue for the superiority of New Rome (i.e., Constantinople) and the Byzantine Empire over the Old—represented by Eirene, the “Alamanni,” and the West in general. The poem can be read as an answer to a letter from Conrad III to Ioannes II, in which the German ruler made the opposite argument.<sup>76</sup> Another anonymous poem refers to the union of Old and New Rome and praises her noble family. According to this poem, and Manganeios Prodromos, Eirene was related to the dynasty of Julius Caesar, a fictional kinship that several encomia apply to ladies from Latin polities.<sup>77</sup> This topos fulfilled the rhetor’s purpose of glorifying the imperial dynasty and emphasizing the universal acceptance of imperial overlordship, at least in the Christian world.<sup>78</sup>

Kinnamos has the empress attest to Manouel’s military prowess in his campaign against the sultanate of Ikonion in 1146, thereby alluding to a shared identity marker. Manouel meant to impress his new wife on this campaign: “the emperor, impelled by his youth, and having not long since wedded a wife, himself desired to achieve something in battle, according to their custom. For to the Latin who has just taken a wife, not to appear valiant entails not inconsiderable dishonor.”<sup>79</sup> The statement points to Manouel’s openness to Western

76 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 20, p. 320(13–24), 321(37–47); Todt (1988), pp. 116–122. This superiority is also argued elsewhere by Prodromos (see no. 16, p. 182[96–99]). Similarly, when Conrad’s half-brother Henry of Austria married Theodora Komnene in order to strengthen the alliance between the Staufers and the Komnenoi, Henry was congratulated for his elevation in rank through his connection with the imperial family (see Jeffreys and Jeffreys [2001], p. 114). BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 94(99)–96(144), also refers to Eirene-Bertha’s arrival in Constantinople and describes how she unexpectedly became empress.

77 See MARC. COD. 524, no. 233, p. 152(6–10): “The noble kings of the people of the Alamanni | put her forth, sons of the Julian caesars, | the lord Manouel, however, unites himself with her, | the Komnenian emperor born in the purple chamber, | into the union of the Old Rome with the New” (“Ἦν Ἀλαμανῶν εὐγενεῖς βῆγες γένους | φύουσι παῖδες καισάρων Ἰουλιῶν, | ἀναξ ἔαυτῷ Μανουῆλ δὲ συνδέει | Κομνηνὸς ἐκφύς πορφύρας αὐτοκράτωρ | Πῶμης παλαιᾶς εἰς ἔνωσιν και νέας). MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems*, no. 29(39, 50), where she is hailed as “descendant of the western caesars” (ἀπόγονος Καισάρων ἑσπερίων) and applauded for being “of the ruling family of the Julian caesars” (ἐκ γένους ἀρχηγῶν Καισάρων Ἰουλιῶν).

See also Gentile Messina (2008), p. 160.

78 Todt (1988), p. 134 (incl. n. 112).

79 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 47(6–10): “βασιλεὺς δὲ τὸ μὲν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ τυραννούμενος τὸ δὲ τι και γυναικὶ οὐ πολλῷ ξυνοικήσας πρότερον, κατὰ ἔθος τὸ αὐτῶν αὐτουργῆσαι τι ἐς τὴν μάχην

customs and values, but it seems to have extended only to customs and values that were compatible with those already upheld in Byzantium. Military prowess was without a doubt an aristocratic and imperial ideal at the time, symbolized by heroes and role models such as Digenes Akrites. Eirene, therefore, played her part in a larger effort to enhance Manouel's prestige, and his attempt to step out from the shadow of his father, an enterprise that eventually succeeded.<sup>80</sup> Another reference is in the same context: "the lady from among the Alamanni who had married him once said in full senate that she drew her descent from a great and most warlike people, but out of all of them she had never heard of any who boasted so many feats in a single year."<sup>81</sup> Kinnamos, and possibly his source, made use of the reputation of Latins, and perhaps more particularly Germans, for military prowess, in order to enhance the image of Manouel as an even greater warrior and general. Moreover, although empresses had public roles and occasionally addressed the senate, it is mentioned rarely because according to convention, the empress was expected to be dignified, silent, and unapproachable whenever she appeared in public, even if it was different in practice for certain imperial women; thus Eirene's praise of her husband before the whole senate gives weight to the episode and the emperor's military prowess.<sup>82</sup>

One of the most important functions the empress was expected to perform was providing her husband with children, and, above all, a male heir. This was especially the case under the Komnenoi, when hereditary succession was key to ensuring political stability.<sup>83</sup> Kinnamos records the birth of Manouel and Eirene's first child after several years of marriage, a daughter called Maria, whom, unsurprisingly (for an encomiastic historiographer, he describes as "outstanding in beauty" (*κάλλει διενεργόν*). She was declared heiress presumptive

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ἤθελεν. ἀνδρὶ γὰρ Λατίνῳ ἄρτι γυναῖκα εἰσοικισαμένῳ μὴ οὐχὶ ἀριστεῖα φανῆναι αἰσχύνῃν οὐχὶ τυχούσαν ἐπάγεται."

80 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 448–449.

81 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 99(21)–100(3): "δι' ἃ ποτε καὶ ἡ ἐξ Ἁλαμανῶν αὐτῷ ξυνοικήσασα ἐπὶ μέσης ἐξελάλησε τῆς συγκλήτου βουλῆς, μεγάλου μὲν καὶ αὐτῆ καὶ πολεμικωτάτου ὠρμήσθαι γένους εἰπούσα, μηδέπω δὲ μηδένα τῶν ἀπάντων ἀκούσαι τοσοῦτοις εἰς ἑναυτὸν ἐγκαλλωπισάμενον ἀριστεύμασιν."

82 Garland (1988), p. 389; (1994), esp. pp. 25–27, 307–310. See also ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.3.2–10, pp. 364(78)–368(86), where she commends the reluctance of her imperial mother to appear in public.

83 According to Basileios of Achrída, Eirene used to pray intensely for a male heir, and he expresses the belief that she overcame her initial infertility through her piety. See BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 112(356–372); Gentile Messina (1996), p. 266, (2008), pp. 163–164.

until such time as a male heir was born.<sup>84</sup> A second daughter is mentioned only when Kinnamos reports the empress's death. This daughter died aged only four.<sup>85</sup> An episode of an anecdotal character is narrated by Choniates according to which the patriarch Kosmas cursed the empress's womb during a conflict with Manouel in 1147. The historian declares himself ignorant of whether the empress was unable to have sons as a result of this curse.<sup>86</sup> The story may, however, have derived from Eirene's failure to produce a male heir, which put Manouel in a difficult political position.<sup>87</sup>

The emperor seems to have relied on Eirene to some extent, despite Choniates's remark that her stubbornness alienated her from him. A certain trust between them can be inferred from Kinnamos stating that when Andronikos conspired against Manouel in the 1150s on a hunting trip, the empress was informed by the πρωτοστράτωρ (imperial stable master) and subsequently Manouel was warned of Andronikos's plan to conduct an assault on the imperial tent after the emperor's return.<sup>88</sup> Eirene's role is mentioned casually, as an imperial encomiastic narrative such as Kinnamos's was not interested in the political influence of Manouel's wife but only in her contribution to the glorification of her husband.<sup>89</sup>

There are further indications of Eirene's political influence, as well as trust and esteem for her on Manouel's part. Choniates's *Historia* relates that after Andronikos escaped from prison during Manouel's absence, the escape was reported to the empress, who might have acted as regent then (1158/59).<sup>90</sup>

84 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 118(19–21).

85 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 202(11–13). Concerning this daughter, who was named Anna and died shortly after her mother, see also BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 112(366–370); Barzos (1984), vol. 2, pp. 452–453; Todt (1988), p. 137; Irmscher (1996a), p. 289. KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Ἱστορικόν*, p. 180(129–139), briefly refers to this daughter and the empress's death as well.

86 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 81(24)–82(52).

87 See also Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 29–30.

88 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 129(15–19). The story is confirmed by the Latin historiographer Rahewin: see Gentile Messina (2008), p. 21.

89 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, p. 98(155–159), illustrates this well: “That, however, the worthy and most beautiful required the most worthy and the most beautiful so they would differ in nothing, but she would be among women what he was among men, even the most boorish and foolish of [all] men will declare” (ὅτι δὲ ὁ ἀξιόσ τε καὶ κάλλιστος τὴν ἀξιοπάτην καὶ καλλιστεύουσεν ἐπεζήτει ἴν' ἐν μηδενὶ ἑτεροζυγῶσιν, ἀλλ' ὅπερ οὗτος ἐν ἀνδράσιν ἐκείνη ἐν γυναίξιν γένοιτο, τοῦτο καὶ ὁ ἀγροικώτατος ἀνθρώπων ἀποφανεῖται καὶ ἡλιθιώτατος). Concerning the historians' lack of interest in Eirene-Bertha's political importance and influence, see also Garland (1999), p. 94.

90 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 107(7–8); BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, pp. 88(1)–92(58). See also Todt (1988), p. 135; Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 20–25; Zorzi (2012), p. 172.

Basileios of Achrida also mentions that Eirene often and successfully asked the emperor to take certain measures in favor of groups and individuals; named by the oration are relatives of the emperor, members of his household, soldiers and generals, “archisatrapas of the Persians [Turkish governors or generals],”<sup>91</sup> as well as widows and orphans of both sexes. She is specifically credited with having arranged marriages for young aristocratic orphan girls. It is probable that high-ranking members of the imperial family were among them, which would reinforce the impression that Manouel made use of his wife’s connections in diplomatic dealings, especially marriage alliances, with Latin powers.<sup>92</sup> At any rate, her mercy is further underlined in the funerary oration: “Oh! How many did she save from a just death [...], how many did she liberate from prison, how many did she deliver from misfortunes!” Monastic communities enjoyed her patronage according to Basileios, to which he adds bishops, a group to which he belonged, expressed by use of the first person of the plural. Whether she was instrumental in helping them with their requests and to obtain audiences with Manouel, as Basileios affirms, is doubtful but conceivable.<sup>93</sup> The assurances that the emperor grieved immensely for her after her death (in early 1160) may be a mere topos without a historical basis, as it strongly resembles encomiastic praise of the emperor’s compassion and dignified sorrow, an imperial virtue.<sup>94</sup> Finally, Choniates briefly refers to a palace that Manouel seems to have built especially for Eirene, a possible indication of esteem, and which was later

91 Concerning the term ἀρχισατράπης, see Gentile Messina (2008), p. 149.

92 The daughters of the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene may well have been among the girls for whom Eirene-Bertha acted as protector, especially Eudokia, whose marriage to Conrad’s son Henry was prevented by the youth’s early death in 1150. See Hiestand (1993), pp. 514–521.

93 BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, pp. 102(232)–106(270); p. 104(252–255): “ὦ πόσους ἐκ θανάτου δικαίου ἐρρύσατο [...], πόσους ἔλυσεν ἐκ δεσμῶν, πόσους ἀπήλλαξε συμφορῶν.” See also Gentile Messina (1996), p. 265. In accordance with Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 56–57, it can likewise be assumed that Basileios regarded it as useful to name those groups as beneficiaries of the empress’s generosity, because the oration especially addressed the upper social strata of Constantinople and the court aristocracy, apart from the emperor himself. Additionally, it can be regarded as an indirect plea to the emperor for continued favor.

94 In this context, the striking similarity between the imagery of the funerary oration and the imagery in Choniates’s description are worth noting. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 115(47–52); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 261, n. 49 (p. 595); BASILEIOS OF ACHRIDA, *Funerary Oration*, esp. pp. 88(1)–90(37), 100(198)–102(209), 102(228–231), 112(373–377); Todt (1988), p. 134; Zorzi (2012), p. 183.

referred to as the “high houses of the empress from the Alamanni” (ὑπερύψηλοι δόμοι τῆς ἐξ Ἀλαμανῶν δεσποίνης).<sup>95</sup>

The sum of the evidence points to a considerable degree of trust between Manouel and Eirene-Bertha and suggests that she managed in large part to fulfill her role as female figurehead.<sup>96</sup> The esteem and influence that Byzantine sources suggest is further supported by Latin source material.<sup>97</sup>

Contrary to Garland’s claim, non-Byzantine empresses were not necessarily disadvantaged because of their background provided they could rely on the authority and support of their imperial husband, the head of the aristocratic clans. If the emperor’s political position was strong, so was the authority granted to and exercised by his female relatives. Empresses of Latin origin compensated for their lack of aristocratic family ties through the “international” political connections they brought to the marriage.<sup>98</sup>

Eirene-Bertha’s most important political role beyond the empire’s frontiers was her connection with the Staufers. As she had been accepted only as the bride of a *sebastokratōr*, not as future empress, Manouel’s unexpected assumption of the throne allowed him to negotiate more favorable terms with King Conrad, who had adopted his relative in order to make her more acceptable.<sup>99</sup> According to Kinnamos, Manouel and Conrad solemnly confirmed upon the latter’s return from the Second Crusade that parts of southern Italy—vaguely referred to as Ἰταλία in Kinnamos’s narrative—should be her marriage portion and, once conquered, handed over to Byzantium, as had been agreed.<sup>100</sup> Concerning her role in the negotiations between Manouel and Conrad III during the Second Crusade, as well as later exchanges with Conrad and Barbarossa, the Byzantine sources are silent, presumably due to the approach toward the political influence of women displayed by the historians and their audience.<sup>101</sup> The marriage to Eirene was thus supposed to help further the cause of the empire in southern Italy, but also to induce the Staufers and other Western powers, including the papacy, to not resist Byzantine efforts

95 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 544(12). The name is mentioned only in the latest version of the text (a), while p. 271(45) might refer to the same building complex. See Magdalino (1978), p. 110, n. 42; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 117, n. 312 (p. 613).

96 See the similar conclusion reached by Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 20–26.

97 Todt (1988), pp. 126–131, 137; Gentile Messina (1996), pp. 268–269.

98 Smythe (1997a), pp. 147–148; Garland (1999), pp. 223–224.

99 Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 10–11; Dendorfer (2013), pp. 63–67.

100 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 87(3–11). The agreement was probably limited to Apulia: see Niederkorn (2000), p. 228.

101 See the the introduction to this chapter and Gentile Messina (2008), pp. 15–19.



at regaining control over Antioch.<sup>102</sup> This connection with Antioch is not referred to by the historiographers; they were either unaware of it or not interested because the principality of Antioch had been tied to Byzantium already through a prestigious marriage alliance with the princely family soon after the death of Manouel's first wife.<sup>103</sup>

### 3 Maria/Xene (Margaret-Constance) of Antioch and the Myth of the “Hated Latin” in the Scholarship

Maria of Antioch, also known as Margaret-Constance,<sup>104</sup> was Manouel's second wife (1161–80) and later empress dowager and regent under the name Xene (1180–82). References and allusions to her Latin background are as rare as they are for the other empresses discussed in this chapter. This is all the more striking because it is often emphasized in the scholarship that this background had a great impact, especially on the political struggles after Manouel's death, under the very questionable assumption that there were something like “pro-Latin” and “anti-Latin” political parties or factions.<sup>105</sup> The Greek sources clearly suggest that her support for the unpopular *prōtosebastos* Alexios Komnenos, combined with the peculiarities of the political order under the Komnenian dynasty, were decisive in bringing about her ousting as regent.<sup>106</sup> Not once is

102 Lilie (1993b), p. 134, 140; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 39–41; Gentile Messina (2008), p. 4; Zorzi (2012), pp. 99–100.

103 For the marriage negotiations and the resulting alliance with Antioch, see Buck (2017), pp. 209–214 (with incorrect dating, however).

104 Maria was her Byzantine name, also used by William of Tyre; other sources name her Margaret and Constance. See Barzos (1984), vol. 1, p. 459 and n. 131.

105 Cf., e.g., Brand (1968), p. 33; Jeffreys (1981), p. 106; Haberstumpf (1983), pp. 631–634; Lilie (1984a), pp. 535–536, (1984b), pp. 85–86, (2004), p. 124; Garland (1997), pp. 274, 284. Cf. also Garland (1999), pp. 209, 223–224, describing Maria-Xene as a “vulnerable target for those with anti-Latin sympathies” (p. 209).

106 See esp. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 224(33)–225(41); Lilie (1984b), p. 87; Hill (1997), pp. 87–88. EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Funeral Oration*, §§ 70–71, stresses her ability as a regent and her imitation of her husband's rule. He expresses confidence in the success of her government but does so in an encomiastic context. Association with Manouel's rule was most probably an asset counted on by Maria-Xene, as also suggested by a sorrowful poem that was displayed at her husband's tomb, possibly as an inscription, which expresses her grief over his death—see Mango (1969/70), pp. 372–375—but it was not enough. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 220(10–23), albeit with hindsight and possibly influenced by his agenda, clearly states that Manouel made insufficient preparations for the event of his death and neglected to choose a protector who “would take care of her [the empress Maria] like a mother” (μητροκομήσοντα) for Alexios. See also Stone

her Latin origin mentioned as a negative factor. On the contrary, her grace and elegant demeanor, implied to be worthy of a Byzantine empress, are underlined in Choniates's account. Interestingly, this praise includes the sound of her voice, which might indicate that her Greek was flawless.<sup>107</sup> As for her monastic name of Xene which she assumed after Manouel's death, it was chosen according to the custom of the Komnenian dynasty. It can, of course, not be excluded that this name, which can designate a "stranger" or "foreigner," was put to use in the context of the propaganda against her, but the sources do not suggest it.<sup>108</sup> All the evidence points to the conclusion that Maria-Xene, having lived in Constantinople for two decades since her teens, had become indistinguishable (or almost) from an imperial woman born in Byzantium. Her birth outside the empire is unlikely to have posed difficulties, at least after a few years of marriage. However, mercenaries, chiefly Latins, were the only supporters the *prōtosebastos* and Maria-Xene could turn to,<sup>109</sup> since the pre-eminence of the *prōtosebastos* and the regents' unwillingness to distribute power more equally and broadly had cost them the support of many aristocrats.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, the empress's alleged love affair with her protégé was used against her.<sup>111</sup>

Clearly, Andronikos Komnenos and his agents targeted all the supporters of the regents, among whom Latin mercenaries and merchants were an important group. Eustathios's allegation that the dowager empress and her favorite intended to hand over the people of the capital as slaves to their Latin

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(2000), p. 270, who observes that both Gregorios Antiochos and Eustathios "are doubtless addressing fears arising from Alexios's minority" in their funeral orations for Manouel.

- 107 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 244(62–66): "For she, by means of her radiant appearance and pearl-like face, her well-tempered character, her open-hearted spirit and the attractive sound of her voice tied everyone to herself as if with a string" (αὐτὴ γὰρ τῷ τῆς θεᾶς λαμπρῷ καὶ τῷ τῆς ὄψεως μαργαρώδει καὶ τῷ τοῦ ἦθους ὀμαλῷ καὶ τῷ τοῦ φρονήματος ἄσυμπλόκῳ καὶ τῷ ἐπαγωγῷ τοῦ φθέγματος ὡς ἀπὸ μηρίθου πάντας ἐφέιλκετο). Under Alexios III, NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 7, pp. 67(29)–68(11), congratulated the empress Euphrosyne for being a native Roman by contrast with her predecessors born outside the empire's borders. This, however, does not have to be taken as evidence for "xenophobia," but rather reflects an effort to politically and rhetorically exploit the advantage of Euphrosyne's ties of kinship and influence with many aristocratic families. An unpublished oration by Nikephoros Chrysoberges similarly praises Euphrosyne "for being a Hellene of the Hellenes, without a drop of Latin blood." See Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 340–341 (incl. n. 51).
- 108 See above, p. 145. Cf. Garland (1997), pp. 273–274.
- 109 Lilie (1984a), p. 535.
- 110 Because of tax exemptions for monasteries and great landowners, they seem to have become quite unpopular with officials and the lower strata of society in the capital as well. See Brand (1968), pp. 32–33.
- 111 Garland (1997), esp. pp. 284–286.

supporters as a reward for their service is probably an example of this propaganda.<sup>112</sup> It is conceivable, however, that this propaganda did not include any references to her being a Latin. Significantly, non-Byzantine sources support this as well. Even William of Tyre, who emphasizes Latin-Greek animosity before the massacre of 1182, does not mention it as a factor.<sup>113</sup> Contrary to William's allegations, which were most probably colored by reports he received from victims and his environment in the Holy Land, there is no solid evidence for there being an "anti-Latin party" in the period of political unrest of 1180–82.<sup>114</sup> The populace of the capital did play a major role, as usual in times of crisis, and was wooed by the various political factions, most successfully by Andronikos's supporters. However, the motives and attitudes of the middle and lower social strata of Constantinople are not described as specifically "anti-Latin" in the Byzantine sources.<sup>115</sup>

The sources reveal, however, that Maria-Xene's Latin birth mattered in other regards and that her background signified shared identity markers. The descriptions of her father, Raymond of Antioch, stress his bravery and knightly virtue, qualities recognized at the Byzantine court and for which Manouel too was praised by the encomiasts.<sup>116</sup> Making use of the Latin reputation for such

112 Lilie (1984a), p. 542, n. 51.

113 For William's attitude, which might not be very representative, see Neocleous (2019), pp. 98–106.

114 Neocleous (2012b), p. 222; Harris (2014), pp. 127–128. For a discussion of the massacre of 1182, see Ch. 2, esp. pp. 106–111, 113–120, 121–122.

115 See Ch. 2, pp. 106–109, 121–122; also Garland (1992), esp. pp. 34–38.

116 See ΝΙΚΕΤΑΣ ΧΟΝΙΑΤΕΣ, Hist., pp. 115(57)–116(59), citing Homer: "This Petebinos [Raymond of Poitiers] was an Italian [Latin] by birth, a steadfast horseman, dexterous with a lance more than the famous Priamos" (ἦν δὲ ὁ Πετεβίνος οὗτος Ἰταλιώτης μὲν τὸ γένος, ἱππότης δ' ἀκράδαντος καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸν Πριάμον ἐκείνον εὐμέλιος). She is also mentioned as Raymond's daughter alongside her sister Philippa, who had an affair with Andronikos, the future emperor, p. 139(42–43). A half-sister, called Agnes, appears as bride of Bela III of Hungary on p. 170(12–14). Raymond's dexterity is also brought up by Kinnamos and is placed alongside his strength, height, and handsome appearance: IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 16(21)–17(16). Elsewhere, Raymond, described as being "more resolute in military affairs than anyone else" (ἑτοιμότετος εἶπερ τις εἰς τὰ πολέμια γεγονώς πράγματα, p. 122[7–8]) and compared to Heracles (p. 125[18–19]), is said to have been impressed by Manouel's military reform which supposedly made the Byzantines more able even than Westerners to fight with horse and lance (p. 125[2–22]). For the praise of Manouel's personal bravery in war and skills as a general, see Magdalino (1993b), ch. 6, esp. pp. 418–421, 431, 433–434, 436, 448–449, 453, 467, 471, 474. The fighting styles, similar to those practiced by Westerners, as well as jousts or joust-like events in Romania under Manouel, are described by Kinnamos, Choniates, Manganeios, and an anonymous ekphrasis: see Schreiner (1996); Maguire and Jones (2002). For the portrayal of Raymond of Poitiers, see also Ch. 15, pp. 419–425.

virtues and ascribing them to the empress's father reflect positively on her and, in turn, the emperor himself in Kinnamos's narrative. Eirene-Bertha's praise for Manouel's bravery in full senate accomplishes a similar purpose.<sup>117</sup> As for Choniates, he probably adopted Raymond's portrayal from an encomiastic source.

Not only is there no evidence that Maria-Xene was subjected to some kind of "Latinophobia," there are other significant indications of esteem and sympathy. Part of these is the lavish praise of her beauty, which was deemed exceptional.<sup>118</sup> Indeed, she was apparently considered so attractive that Andronikos

117 See above, p. 155.

118 Her visual depiction in the Vat. gr. 1176 manuscript represents ideal beauty, worthy of a Byzantine empress. Maria is depicted as tall, with light hair, white skin, and rosy cheeks. This contrasts with the dark skin of her imperial husband, which is corroborated by literary sources and might stand for masculine military virtues complementing the female beauty and virtues of the empress. See Hilsdale (2005), p. 459; also see above, pp. 87–88. The description by various literati matches this depiction perfectly: EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Funeral Oration, § 70; EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Hist., p. 18(18–21): "Before [he died, Manouel] entrusted the son to the mother as guardian, who was eager for passionate love affairs, even if she gave orders to hide them, spiritually eclipsing the sun of her beauty in dark garment" (ἀμέλει και ἐπέτρεψε φθάσας κηδεμόνι τὸν υἱὸν τῆ μητρὶ, ἐρώτων οὔση ὠραία, εἰ και κρύπτεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἐπηγγεῖλατο ἐκείνη, τὸν τοῦ κάλλους ἡλιον πνευματικῶς νεφώσασα κατὰ περιβολὴν μέλαιναν); IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 210(8–12): "When [the envoy Basileios Kamateros] swiftly reached Antiocheia, he saw that both [Maria and her sister] were beautiful, but Maria appeared to him the more beautiful. That envoy's inquiry proved correct. Our era, the Byzantines [Constantinopolitans] used to say, has never yet been acquainted with such beauty" (ὁ δὲ ἐπειδὴ τάχιστα πρὸς Ἀντιοχεία ἐγένετο, καλὰς μὲν εἶδε και ἄμφω, καλλίων δὲ οἱ ἡ Μαρία εἶναι κατεφάνη. και ἔτυχε γε τῆς ἀκριβείας ἡ τοῦ πρεσβευτοῦ ἐκείνου βάσανος. τηλικον γὰρ κάλλος οὐπω, Βυζάντιοι ἔλεγον, ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐγνώρισεν αἰῶν); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 116(61–66): "The woman was beautiful, very beautiful, so exceedingly beautiful and of such incomprehensible beauty as the tale says about Aphrodite herself, the laughter-loving and golden one, Hera, the white-armed and ox-eyed, and the Lakonian [Helen], long-necked and beautiful-ankled, whom people long ago deified because of their beauty, and all the others of whom books and stories relate that they were magnificent to behold" (ἦν δὲ καλὴ τὸ εἶδος ἡ γυνή, και καλὴ λίαν, και ἔως σφόδρα καλὴ και τὸ κάλλος ἀξὺμβλητος, ὡς μῦθος εἶναι ἀτεχνῶς πρὸς αὐτὴν Ἀφροδίτην τὴν φιλομειδῆ και χρυσῆν, Ἥραν τὴν λευκώλενον και βοῶπιιν, και τὴν δολιχόχειρον και καλλίσφυρον Λάκαιναν, ἃς οἱ πάλαι διὰ τὸ κάλλος ἐθέωσαν, και τὰς λοιπὰς δὲ ἀπάσας, ὅσας βιβλίοι και ἱστορία διαπρεπεῖς τὴν θεᾶν παραδεδώκασιν). See also *ibid.*, p. 269(90): "sweet light and beautiful to behold for men" (τὸ γλυκερὸν φᾶος και καλὸν ὄραμα ἀνθρώποις) and p. 333(40–41): "that radiant, most beautiful appearance, most worthy of admiration" (τὸ λαμπρὸν ἐκεῖνο και περικαλλέστατον εἶδος και τοῦ θαυμάζεσθαι ἀξιώτατον ὑποβλεπόμενος ἔλεον), as well as NIKETAS CHONIATES, Orations, no. 5, p. 40(22–25): "He [Manouel] espoused from this family that woman most beautiful among women, who truly was the nosegay of the family" (ἐκ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης ἐμνηστεύσατό οἱ γυναῖκα τὴν ἐν γυναιξὶ καλλίστην ἐκείνην, τὸ τοῦ γένους ὄντως ὀσφράδιον); KONSTANTINOS MANASSES,

Komnenos, once he had taken over the government in Constantinople, felt it necessary to alter public depictions of Maria-Xene to make her appear old and shriveled.<sup>119</sup> These public representations played a major role in political power struggles and were a point of reference for the masses.<sup>120</sup> This is also noteworthy because physical beauty was often considered to reflect inner beauty or virtue and was associated with power, even with a claim to imperial rule in many cases. The frequently praised harmony of a person's limbs, for example, was regarded as reflecting an innate orderliness. Andronikos accordingly intended to propagate the message that the dowager empress was morally depraved and unfit to exercise political authority.<sup>121</sup> It is equally noteworthy that Andronikos apparently felt it necessary to remove her from the palace and have her executed, which required him to overcome resolute opposition. This indicates a limited personal animosity toward Maria-Xene among the aristocracy and perhaps also the Constantinopolitan populace, especially once she had lost the monopoly of power that had previously aroused resentment.<sup>122</sup> Again, there is no mention of or allusion to her Latin origin, and the rumor credited by Eustathios that she conspired with Westerners against the Constantinopolitans<sup>123</sup> is not cited among the accusations against her; Choniates merely states that she was accused of treacherously inciting her brother-in-law, Bela of Hungary, to assist her against Andronikos by invading Romania.<sup>124</sup> Overall, therefore, the description of her death confirms the hypothesis that there was considerable sympathy for Maria-Xene and that the resentment against her stemmed mainly from her monopolization of power,

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Ὁδοιπορικόν, p. 210(51–55): “The golden city, namely, of the Antiochenes | generated in her midst the branch of the graces | who was worthy of such great marriage bond, | a maiden with beautiful eyes, an attractive maiden, | descendant from the roots of royal families” (ἡ χρυσέα γὰρ Ἀντιοχέων πόλις | τὸν τῶν Χαρίτων ὑπεμόσχευε κλάδον, | ἐπάξιον τελοῦντα τηλικού γάμου, | κόρην χαριτόφθαλμον, εὖοπτον κόρην, | ῥηγεκγόνων βλαστῶσαν ἐκ ῥιζωμάτων).

119 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 332(37)–333(44).

120 See e.g., Magdalino and Nelson (1991); Magdalino (1993b), pp. 470–477; Oikonomides (2005), no. 12.

121 Hill (1999), pp. 88–89; Hatzaki (2013), p. 240. It was conceivable, however, to be physically ugly and still beautiful inside, or vice versa. See Hill (1999), p. 91; Hatzaki (2009), p. 42. On the relationship between beauty and power, see *ibid.*, ch. 3, pp. 49–65.

122 As a matter of course, this consideration does not exclude the possibility that many were reluctant to have the empress dowager executed because of likely repercussions for Byzantium's relationship with Western powers and the crusader polities.

123 See Ch. 2, pp. 114–115.

124 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 265(82)–269(1). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 109, n. 290 (pp. 608–609).

the relationship with the *prōtosebastos*, other political mistakes and propaganda exploiting these factors.

Moreover, the specific description of her appearance is another piece of evidence suggesting that Western ideals of beauty were compatible with those in Byzantium. The ideal features of Melisende of Tripolis, Manouel's alternative bride, as described by Manasses, are strikingly similar to Western literary concepts from the same period. They also include the idea of a connection between physical and inner beauty. Furthermore, ideal masculine attributes are also close to Western ones.<sup>125</sup>

Maria's noble ancestry and ties of kinship with princes and kings are brought up by Manasses and in some anonymous poems in the famous Codex Graecus 524 of the National Library of St Mark's. This is unsurprising: noble birth was a quality held in high regard in the Komnenian period, and the connection with the principality of Antioch was of crucial political importance.<sup>126</sup> Eustathios of Thessalonike likewise stresses the prestige of the alliance with Antioch in his funeral oration for Manouel.<sup>127</sup> In his wedding oration, Choniates suggests indirectly that Maria-Xene was a descendant of the Julian-Claudian dynasty because such a descent is ascribed to her niece, the bride of Isaakios II. In

125 KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Ὀδοιπορικόν*, names the following attributes: snow-white, radiant skin and face (pp. 180[159–160], 182[167], 184[202]), harmonious, proportionate limbs (p. 182[168–169]), tall and straight (pp. 182[169], 184[197–198]), intensely red lips and cheeks (p. 182[175–176]), golden blond hair (p. 182[168, 172]). See Garland (1994); Hatzaki (2009); (2013) for further considerations of Byzantine ideals of (physical) male and female beauty. For the West, see indicatively the articles by Rohr and Ostheeren in Stemmler (1988); and Cardelle de Hartmann (2011). For an interpretation of Byzantine descriptions of the beauty of Western ladies, see Koutrakou (2015), who tends to exaggerate the association with warfare. Concerning the omission of Melisende's description in one version of the poem, see Nilsson (2012), p. 188, n. 30. Examples of the appreciation of the beauty of Western men can be found in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 171(36–40): Renier of Montferrat; ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.7.6, p. 183(56–63): Robert Guiscard; XIII.10.4, pp. 411(25)–412(49): Bohemond; IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 17(2–3): Raymond of Poitiers. See also the chapters and sections concerning these individuals.

126 KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Ὀδοιπορικόν*, p. 210(55); MARC. COD. 524, no. 98, p. 55, no. 100, p. 57(9): "Maria, daughter of princes, mistress of New Rome, descendant of kings" (*πριγκίπων παῖς Μαρία, Πώμης νέας ἀνασσα, ῥηγῶν εκγονή*), no. 109, 126(15): "Maria of Italian origin" (*ἰταλοφυῆς Μαρία*), no. 221, p. 145: "the lady Maria [...] who formerly bore the rule of the land of Antiochos [principality of Antioch], and now through him [Manouel] of the whole worldly orbit" (*ἡ ἀνασσα Μαρία [...] Ἀντιόχου γῆς πρὶν φέρουσα το κράτος καὶ νῦν δι' αὐτοῦ κοσμοῦ παντὸς κύκλου*), no. 335, p. 178(7): "offspring of kings, [imperial] companion Maria" (*βλάστημα ῥηγῶν, συμπάρευνος Μαρία*), no. 336, p. 178(4): "co-ruler, royal offspring Maria" (*συναυτάνασσα, ῥηγόβλαστος Μαρία*).

127 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Funeral Oration*, § 16, esp. p. 16(1–2): "she appeared from the east like the sun" (*οἶα καὶ ἥλιος ἐξ ἑφάας ἔφανεν*).

Maria-Xene's case, this topos, standing for the recognition of Byzantine rule over the ecumene in the West, was especially relevant in relation to the crusader polities.<sup>128</sup> A single passage in Choniates's narrative points to Maria's influence as Manouel's wife in dealing with Western envoys. Such an influence is suggested by Byzantine and Latin sources for other empresses from abroad in the twelfth century, but it has left only faint traces in the extant historical records.<sup>129</sup> According to Choniates, at any rate, the empress Maria uncovered an attempt at deceiving Manouel on the part of Isaakios Aaron, who had the duty to translate a message delivered by Latin envoys. He had learned "the Latin tongue" (Λατινὴ γλῶττα) to perfection (ἄκρως) as a captive in Norman Sicily. Maria, however, being a "Latin" (Λατινίς), understood what was going on and notified her husband of Isaakios's misrepresentation.<sup>130</sup>

This very brief passage is one of many that point out the secondary importance of illustrative tales about Latins, their languages, customs, and culture in the histories of the twelfth century. It can be inferred from this passage that even Manouel, whose openness to Western culture is often emphasized in secondary sources, most probably did not bother to learn Latin or any other Western language; nor does he appear to have encouraged Byzantine scholars to do so unless for practical purposes. The Byzantine government's intention was probably to integrate as many Latins as possible into the imperial ecumene, but they were expected to submit and adapt to Byzantine expectations. The use of translations and interpreters alone appears to have constituted a pragmatic concession, although this aspect of communication with Westerners remains elusive and difficult to reconstruct.<sup>131</sup> In addition, it may be significant that there is no evidence that Alexios, the couple's son born in September 1169 after seven years of childlessness, learned more about Latin culture than other Byzantine princes, despite being Maria's son.<sup>132</sup>

128 See pp. 145, 146, and 154; for the crusader polities, see esp. Ch. 15, sections 4–6.

129 As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the conventions for the representation of women in Byzantium did not favor discussions of such influence.

130 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 144(84–89), 146(52)–147(66).

131 Grünbart (2019), p. 29. See also Chs. 6 and 7, esp. pp. 205 and 221–222.

132 Alexios's birth is described by NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 168(79)–169(4), and IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 256(15)–257(10). An unpublished sermon by Samouel Mauropous also addresses this event: see Magdalino (1993b), pp. 243, 381, 464–465. The miscarriage mentioned by Kinnamos, as well as the long period of waiting and hoping for an heir, may be reflected in an anonymous poem (MARC. COD. 524, no. 100, p. 57) in which Maria asks Saint Anna for the safe delivery of a child.

#### 4 Anna (Agnes) and the Unequal Alliance with France

The child empress Agnes of France, known as Anna in Romania, goes almost unmentioned in historiography. In addition to the generally limited coverage of imperial women, Anna was a child when she was married to Alexios II<sup>133</sup> and later Andronikos I, and her time as empress was relatively brief. Eustathios and Choniates, referring to her as a daughter of “the ruler of the Franks” and “the king of Frangia” respectively, express indignation at the scandalous marriage between the elderly Andronikos and the girl, who was not yet eleven years old, after the murder of Alexios II at the instigation of the “tyrant.”<sup>134</sup>

For more representations of Anna-Agnes, it is then necessary to turn to sources other than historiography. Her relative and mother-in-law Maria-Xene may have commissioned, or at least influenced, the vernacular “welcoming verses” (εἰσιτήριοι) for Anna-Agnes. The illustrations, script, and language suggest that they were specially produced for the young princess and had a didactic purpose, as she probably had little, if any, knowledge of Greek at the time. The poem also reflects tension between Maria-Xene and Maria Komnene, Manouel’s daughter born in the purple. This rivalry affected the empress’s son, the young Alexios, as it did his fiancée.

To see a reflection of “anti-Latin” or “pro-Latin” attitudes in this source, as argued by, among others, Michael Jeffreys and Cecily Hilsdale, is unnecessary. It should be remembered, moreover, that Maria Komnene’s mother was of Western origin, as was her husband Ioannes-Renier. The claim that Anna-Agnes was more beautiful than Manouel’s daughter may be due to the anonymous poet’s anticipation of Maria-Xene’s regency and Alexios II’s rule. Indeed, Manouel’s first-born child was opposed to the marriage and hoped, following her father’s death, to assume the regency alongside her husband, Ioannes-Renier, and to strengthen her position by choosing a bride for Alexios. The poet’s expression of fear may constitute a mockery of the purple-born Maria and her supporters, whose ambitions were surely known to her stepmother.<sup>135</sup>

133 According to Schreiner (2019), p. 206, the union between Alexios and Anna-Agnes was considered a legal marriage rather than a betrothal, even if it was not yet a marriage in a canonical sense due to the couple’s age.

134 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 52(23–29); NIKETAS CHONIATES, pp. 275(12)–276(19).

135 EISITEROI FOR ANNA-AGNES, ed. Spatharakis (1976), translation in Strzygowski (1901). Jeffreys (1981), Scholz (2002), and Hilsdale (2005) also discuss the manuscript and refer to additional studies. Interestingly, Hilsdale questions her own support of the “anti-Latin” vs. “pro-Latin” hypothesis (p. 474) in a note (p. 461, n. 39), referring to Magdalino (1993b), p. 225, and towards the end of her article (p. 477): “The political message should perhaps



The fragmentary state of the extant manuscript and lack of context, however, complicates any assessment. An interesting visual aspect of the manuscript, also reflected in Byzantine literature, is the role of dress as a marker of rank and identity, a medium which helped to transform a non-Byzantine bride into a member of the imperial family.<sup>136</sup>

One of Eustathios of Thessalonike's orations also refers to Anna-Agnes. It was presumably delivered in the summer of 1179 and makes some allusions to the political circumstances of the marriage alliance. The familiar trope of the elevation in rank of Western aristocrats through a matrimonial connection with the imperial dynasty and thus Byzantine superiority is expressed by Eustathios: "transplanted into a peaceful setting from their former state of wilderness, these things from the West are more beautiful" (μετακεντρισθῶσιν εἰς ἡμέρα ἐξ ἀγριότητος· καλλίω ταῦτα τὰ ἐξ ἐσπέρας). Eustathios adds that "the Germanic or Frankish people surely is great and held in the greatest fame" (πολὺ γὰρ δῆπουθεν καὶ ἐν μεγίστῳ λόγου κείμενον τὸ Γερμανικὸν φύλον εἴτουσιν Φραγγικόν), possibly alluding to military prowess, that of the French in particular, and with the intention of honoring the bride as well as the alliance with her father.<sup>137</sup> William of Tyre confirms that the wedding was perceived as a very prestigious alliance but unequal: the celebrations in Constantinople and the old imperial palace, used for the wedding, did not fail to impress and emphasize the Byzantine superiority celebrated by Eustathios.<sup>138</sup>

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not be read as anti-Byzantine and pro-Western but rather as anti-Maria Porphyrogenita and pro-Marie of Antioch." On the ambition and determination of the purple-born Maria, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 171(40) stating that she had the spirit of a man, and esp. pp. 230(2)–231(5): "She generally welcomed bold action, too, and being of a manly spirit, she added [to the hatred against the *prōtosebastos*] also the natural, profound jealousy of her stepmother, as she did not bear to be surpassed by her in honors and to be suspected as an opponent" (καὶ ἄλλως δὲ θερμουργίαν ἀσπαζομένη καὶ ἀνδρική τὸ φρόνημα οὖσα, προσκτωμένη δὲ καὶ τὸ φύσει πρὸς τὴν μητριαν βαρύζηλον, οὐχὶ στέγουσα δὲ καὶ τὸ παρευδοκιμῆσθαι καὶ ὡς ἀντικαθισταμένη τις ὑποβλέπεσθαι). That Maria-Xene might have been very ill-disposed towards her stepdaughter is indicated *ibid.*, p. 232(33–34): "[The purple-born Maria sought refuge in the church of Hagia Sophia] saying that she was escaping from her stepmother, who was very angry with her" (βαρυμηνιώσαν κατ' αὐτῆς ἐκδιδράσκειν φάσκουσα μητριαν).

136 Hilsdale (2005), pp. 468–469. For a brief discussion of clothing as a marker of identity, see Ch. 1, p. 29.

137 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 251(27–49). See also EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Funeral Oration*, § 16, p. 16(3–4): "The other [Anna-Agnes] has also shone forth, like the evening star washed by the western ocean nearby" (ἡ δὲ, ὡς ἀγχόθι που λελουμένη ὠκεανοῦ ἐσπερίου, καὶ αὐτὴ φωσφόρος ἐπηύγασεν).

138 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.4; Schreiner (2019), p. 207.

The reference to the Second Crusade, which formed a part of the background of the French alliance, replays its portrayal at the time of the crusade's passage through Romania. It emphasizes the hostile intentions of the crusaders and their greed for the riches of the empire and the capital, and it expresses the belief that the emperor will protect his subjects who therefore owe him their allegiance. Manouel appears to have made use of the situation to enhance the stability of his rule by means of this propagandistic narrative spread by his rhetors.<sup>139</sup> Eustathios even credits his imperial master for having pacified the hostile French king and reinforces the point that the alliance was not one of equals, for Louis agreed to his subjection:

[Because of the humbling experience of the Second Crusade, Louis] intends to buy with the whole of his realm union and friendship with [i.e. subjection to] the imperial dignity, and loudly implores to exchange his subjection to the emperor for an imperial accord, and, rejecting that which belongs to Ares, comes to call upon God.<sup>140</sup>

The hope for a long-lasting alliance is expressed by means of a “golden chain” (χρυσέα σείρά), which refers to Manouel's policy of forming and strengthening ties of kinship with Western dynasties. Eustathios also alludes to the “international” political context of the marriage, stating that a “wound” (blow) was inflicted on the “European peoples” (Εὐρωπαϊά ἔθνη) and that they were therefore ill-disposed toward the cause of the Byzantines. He probably alluded to the German monarch, who in July 1177 had concluded the Peace of Venice, unfavorable to Romania, with the pope. Kinnamos deplures this treaty because it brought about a relative isolation of Byzantium in the West. The alliance with France, however, put an end to this situation.<sup>141</sup> Besides the Staufers, the opponents of the Byzantine alliance were those among Louis VII's subjects who favored a marriage with the German imperial dynasty rather than the Komnenoi, notably the House of Blois-Champagne. Some of its members may have accompanied Anna-Agnes on the journey to Constantinople, and Eustathios possibly alludes to them: “God calmed the sea [...] it was sufficiently

139 See Ch. 11.

140 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, pp. 251(49)–252(62); *ibid.*, p. 252(59–62): “τῆς ὅλης ἀρχῆς προτίθεται πρίασθαι εἰς ἔν ἐλθεῖν φιλίως τῷ βασιλικῷ ἀξιώματι καὶ εἰς ἀντάλλαγμα δουλώσεως τὸ βασιλικὸν ποτνιατάι συνάλλαγμα καὶ τὸ Ἀρεϊκὸν ἀπορρίψας εἰς θεοκλύτησιν ἔρχεται.”

141 See Ch. 12, pp. 348–351.

amazing that this should happen to beasts belonging to dry land, made marine because of the submergence of their lair, [...] some of them unwillingly.”<sup>142</sup>

The idea that Anna's dynasty is noble, great, and worthy of alliance, but that the imperial dynasty is greater, is further developed following the pointed remarks about the critics of the marriage alliance: “[for encomiasts, the princess] will provide a great contest, and they will compare one dynasty with another, one that is fine with this one, which is the finest, the great one from the West with our own, which is the greatest.”<sup>143</sup> She is referred to as “royal [or imperial] child” (βασιλική παῖς), which relates to her royal birth and/or to her destiny to marry the imperial heir.<sup>144</sup> Louis, her father, is credited as “ruler of an immense land” (ἔξάρχων γῆς ἀπειρίτου). Both Eustathios and the anonymous poet lament the king's misfortune in being parted from his wonderful daughter. They express the hope that the father-in-law of the bride, the emperor, will become a second father to her. These descriptions form an integral part of the glorification of the imperial bride. Besides her merits, they underline the considerable honor bestowed upon the French king, with the implication that only the prospect of such a prestigious marriage induced him to let his daughter go. Manouel is portrayed as “the even greater one, the emperor” (καὶ μείζων βασιλεύς) and is said to have treated the king like a son treats a father (during the Second Crusade) “when he came subserviently to him” (ἦνίκα δουλικῶς αὐτῷ προσενήνεκτο).<sup>145</sup>

Eustathios then introduces the aforementioned topos that the bride should forget about her father's home and her people, implying Byzantine political and cultural superiority.<sup>146</sup> Correspondingly, the bride is expected to consider the new land entirely as her fatherland (πάσα πατρίς).<sup>147</sup> Disregard for one's origin was more than a topos applied to Western princesses in imperial orations. According to the historiographer Robert of Clari, the former empress

142 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, pp. 252(64)–253(23); see p. 253(17–23): “ἔστώρεσε δὲ θεὸς μεγακῆτεα πόντον, [...] ἤρκεσε γὰρ εἰς θαύμα τὸ τὰ χερσαῖα θηρία τὰ διὰ τὸ τῆς ἐνέδρας ὑπουλον ὕφαλα τοιοῦτόν τι παθεῖν, [...] τὸ δ' οὐχ' ἐκόντα.”

143 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 253(29–31): “πολὺν ἀγῶνα παρέξεται, οἱ παρεξετάσουσι γένος μὲν γένει, καλὸν ἐκεῖνο καλλίστῳ τούτῳ, μέγα τὸ ἐξ ἐσπέρας μεγίστῳ τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς.”

144 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 255(67–68).

145 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 256(8–21); EISITEROI FOR ANNA-AGNES, fol. 8r.–8v., pp. 220–221, fol. 2r., p. 221.

146 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 256(24–26). See the previous sections. Eustathios also makes honorable mention of the Genoese transporting Anna-Agnes to the capital by sea, see Ch. 2, pp. 105–106.

147 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 15, p. 256(33). The concept is also applied to Ancona in the oration of 1174 (no. 16, pp. 277[73]–278[77]).

Agnes spoke only Greek and was unable to communicate with her countrymen in 1204. Alternatively, she may have feigned ignorance of their language because of how she felt about the conquest, sack and considerable destruction of Constantinople, the city she considered her home by then.<sup>148</sup> At any rate, Clari's description suggests the said attitudes of Byzantine cultural-political superiority, disinterest in other languages, and the assimilation of Westerners at imperial and aristocratic levels. Accordingly, it is likely that Anna-Agnes had—willingly or unwillingly—become indistinguishably Byzantine, like her predecessors, with the possible exception of Eirene-Bertha.

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148 ROBERT OF CLARI, *Hist.*, p. 128(1–11).

## The Brothers from Μόντη Φεράντη (Montferrat) as a Male Counterpart

### 1 The Beauty and Virtue of Ioannes (Renier of Montferrat)

As Choniates explains, Emperor Manouel (pursuing a policy of close and friendly relations with Western powers) had for many years sought a prestigious marriage for his first-born child, the purple-born Maria.<sup>1</sup> After exploring the possibility of a union with the Arpads of Hungary, the Staufers of the Holy Roman Empire, the Angevins of England—who also ruled over half of France—and the Norman rulers of Sicily, he finally settled on an alliance with William, the marquess of Montferrat of the Aleramici dynasty. Although the marriage to William's youngest son, Renier, was not what the imperial government might have hoped for, it nevertheless entailed considerable political advantages due to the close kinship of the Aleramici with powerful Western dynasties, as well as their influence in Italy.<sup>2</sup> Having fallen out with the Staufers, the Aleramici allied with Manouel in the late 1170s, fighting the Germans and even capturing the Holy Roman Emperor's chancellor and representative in Italy, Archbishop Christian of Mainz. This military conflict seriously endangered the Peace of Venice, which had been concluded in July 1177.<sup>3</sup> It is significant that the nephew and heir of King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem (d. 1185), ruling briefly as Baldwin V (1185–86), was a grandson of the marquess, his father being William Longsword (d. 1177) and Renier, therefore, his uncle. Manouel's dealings and marriage alliances with the crusader polities and his influence among them was a priority. These marriage alliances were in line with his political orientations in the East, notably relations with the sultanate of Ikonion.<sup>4</sup>

Given their introspective concerns,<sup>5</sup> it is not surprising that the narratives of Choniates and Eustathios do not address in any detail the political background

1 For a brief general discussion of Byzantine imperial marriage strategies at the time, see the introduction to Ch. 3.

2 Magdalino (1993b), p. 101.

3 Haberstumpf (1983); Stone (2003b), p. 116. See also Ch. 12, pp. 343–344.

4 See especially Lilie (1993b), pp. 142–221; Harris (2014), pp. 99–120; also Haberstumpf (1989) on William Longsword.

5 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

of the Montferrat alliance, but indicate a certain cultural proximity. Renier's relevance in these histories lies in his connection to the imperial dynasty and the political struggles of 1180–82. He is first introduced in the narrative of Choniates in an account of Manouel's unsuccessful attempts to find a suitable husband from a Western dynasty for his daughter Maria. Renier does not appear in Byzantine sources by name, which is indicative of attitudes of cultural superiority; only Eustathios mentions him, by the name he adopted in Byzantium: Ioannes,<sup>6</sup> whereas Choniates describes him as “one of the sons of the markesios of Montferrat” (εἷς τῶν τοῦ μαρκεσίου Μόντης Φεράντης υἱῶν). Kinnamos does not mention him because his roughly chronological narrative ends before Renier's arrival in Byzantium. Choniates stresses the youth's beauty: “of comely looks, delightful to behold, with blond hair like the sun, good looking, he had not yet grown a beard” (χαρίεις τὴν ὄψιν καὶ ἰδεῖν ἥδιστος καὶ τὴν κόμην ἡλίω καὶ εὐπρεπῆς καὶ μήπω φύων γένειον).<sup>7</sup> As Myrto Hatzaki, among others, has commented, it is not unusual for Byzantine literary works to appreciate the beauty of a beardless youth. Like the description of Maria-Xene, that of Ioannes-Renier points to the compatibility of Byzantine ideals of beauty with those in the West, and signifies an appreciation of the appearance of Latins regardless of sex.<sup>8</sup> Shaving does not appear to have hindered this appreciation. While wearing a beard continued as the norm, including for young men who were able to grow one, there appear to have been deviating practices in the twelfth century. Zonaras, Eustathios of Thessalonike, and Michael Choniates condemn young men for shaving off their beards, which inversely points to a certain popularity of beardlessness within Byzantine society of the long twelfth century, which appears to have been particularly innovative in various respects.<sup>9</sup>

Another indication of proximity is the praise for the noble birth of Marquess William, the large number of his children, and his political power (εὐγενεία καὶ εὐτεχνία κομῶν καὶ μέγα δυνάμενος). In his book about the reign of Alexios II, Choniates addresses the youngest son of the marquess as *kaisar* “of Italian

6 Eustathios of Thessalonike, *Hist.*, p. 20(18).

7 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 170(34)–171(40). The marriage is also mentioned in the context of the discussion of Manouel I's political activities in Italy and his alliance with Marquess William of Montferrat against the Staufers: p. 200(85–86).

8 Hatzaki (2009), esp. pp. 106, 137–138. See also pp. 146 and 162–164.

9 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Canonic Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 534; EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Commentary on the Odyssey*, vol. 1, p. 382(3–6); MICHAEL CHONIATES, *Works*, vol. 1, p. 43; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 385–387; Tougher (2013); Rodriguez Suarez (2014), pp. 248–253; Drocourt (2016).

origin" (ἐξ Ἰταλῶν ὀρμώμενος), thereby implying that the title had been conferred upon him as a result of his marriage to the purple-born Maria.<sup>10</sup>

Renier did not receive one of the two higher titles of despot or *σεβαστοκράτωρ*, because Manouel, probably influenced by his wife Maria of Antioch, intended to limit the influence and prestige of his daughter and son-in-law. The choice of Renier as Maria's husband entailed several advantages besides gaining an ally in Italy. An alliance with a Byzantine aristocratic family would have provoked the envy of other clans associated with the ruling Komnenoi. Additionally, it would take considerable time for a youth with little knowledge of the Greek language and Byzantine customs to gain influence in aristocratic circles. This minimized the risk of the chosen individual becoming the leader of a conspiracy against the rule of Alexios II or his regents and taking his place as emperor.<sup>11</sup> Most of Renier's influence stemmed from his purple-born wife,<sup>12</sup> whose gender reduced her potential to assume the regency for her brother or to depose and replace him. Therefore, Manouel's hope would have been that, should he die soon,<sup>13</sup> his son's position would be less endangered before he reached adulthood and had consolidated his reign. Despite such an effort to limit the *kaisar's* influence, Renier was presumably a member of the regency council for Alexios II,<sup>14</sup> although the dowager empress and the *prōtosebastos* soon took control. Renier was considered dangerous enough by the usurper Andronikos to be poisoned, together with his wife, as was rumored at the time according to Choniates.<sup>15</sup>

Subsequently, Ioannes-Renier appears alongside his wife the *kaisarissa* as an opponent of and conspirator against the regency of Maria-Xene and her favorite, the *prōtosebastos* Alexios Komnenos. Choniates describes how, during the political struggles after Manouel's death, the *kaisar* Ioannes and the *kaisarissa* Maria sought asylum in the Hagia Sophia, which the patriarch granted to protect them from the regents.<sup>16</sup>

10 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 200(83–85), 230(95).

11 Lilie (1984b), p. 86. Contrary to Lilie's opinion, however, there is no indication that Renier's origin as such caused any resentment, although this idea may be tempting from a modern perspective, which, of course, can hardly be uncritically assumed for Romania in the twelfth century. See also Ch. 1, pp. 27–30.

12 Brand (1968), p. 34.

13 See Brand (1968), p. 29: "[Manouel] foresaw his death perhaps as early as 1178 when he began to arrange his children's marriages, certainly by April 1180."

14 Brand (1968), p. 29.

15 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 260(47–50). A later source, perhaps based on an obituary, indicates that Renier died on 8 August 1183, i.e., shortly before the murder of his brother-in-law Alexios II. See Haberstumpf (1983), p. 635, n. 141.

16 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 232(32)–233(49).

The description of the civil “Holy War” for control of the imperial church contains a remarkable military speech that may have been invented completely or in large part by Choniates. The speech gives voice to the historian’s criticism of the powerful and conforms with the history’s habit of having Westerners, deemed culturally inferior overall, express his criticism.<sup>17</sup> The *kaisar* Ioannes condemns the said “Holy War” as a struggle among fellow Romans and fellow (Christian) believers (ὁμόφυλοι καὶ ὁμόπιστοι), although the blame is put on the regents and their troops. Moreover, they are accused of having no respect for the holiness of the Great Church and of intending to rob Hagia Sophia of valuable and sacred treasures.<sup>18</sup> Similar accusations of blasphemy are levelled against the Angeloi emperors, especially in the revision and continuations of the history written after 1204, and, following the description of the “Holy War,” Choniates does not hesitate to blame both sides for the desecration of Hagia Sophia.<sup>19</sup> The speech also serves to highlight moral decay under the later Komnenoi.

His description of the assault by the *kaisar*’s men, notably the remainder of his Latin bodyguard (Λατινικὸν δορυφορικόν),<sup>20</sup> on the troops of the regents alludes to the oft-mentioned Latin reputation for military prowess. The remark that they resembled bronze statues reinforces their reputation for being heavily armed and armored.<sup>21</sup> Eustathios echoes this portrayal when, in the context of the description of the first conspiracy against the *prōtosebastos*, he introduces “Ioannes the markesios” as “a youth with respect to age, but fully developed in manly bravery.”<sup>22</sup>

## 2 Korrados (Conrad of Montferrat): Role Model and Savior

The portrayal of Renier’s older brother, Conrad,<sup>23</sup> is strikingly similar to that of Renier in terms of virtues and external appearance. It plays an important role in Choniates’s account of the reign and character of Isaakios II (1185–95).

17 Brand (1968), p. 36, and n. 13; Haberstumpf (1983), pp. 633–634.

18 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 238(85)–239(32).

19 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 241(70–87).

20 Mentioned before the speech: NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 238(94).

21 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 239(34)–240(56). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 43, n. 117 (p. 575).

22 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 20(18–19): “Ἰωάννης ὁ μαρκέσιος, νεανίας μὲν τὴν ἡλικίαν, τέλειος δὲ τὴν ἀνδρείαν.”

23 On Conrad of Montferrat in general, see the studies of the crusades cited in the Introduction, as well as those referred to below.



Conrad accompanied Renier to Constantinople and stayed for a few months before returning to Italy after the accession of Alexios II in September 1180.<sup>24</sup> Following Andronikos I's brief rule, Conrad was invited back to marry Theodora Angelina, the sister of Emperor Isaakios II. Subsequent to the marriage ceremony in the spring of 1187, Conrad, like his brother before him, received the title of *kaisar*.<sup>25</sup> Shortly after, he played a crucial role in defeating the rebellion of the accomplished general Alexios Branas, taking him by surprise with a sortie of the imperial forces besieged in the capital.<sup>26</sup> This success, however, made Conrad unpopular with many aristocrats who were supporters of the famous Branas. In addition, Isaakios began to see his successful brother-in-law as a dangerous rival, and withheld the blue buskins from him—the mark of a *kaisar's* rank. When news of the dire situation of the crusader polities struggling against Saladin reached him, Conrad took the favorable opportunity and escaped Constantinople by ship to assist the Latins in the Holy Land.<sup>27</sup>

When Conrad is introduced, he is praised in a similar manner to that of his brother Ioannes-Renier and with similar introspective criticism (of Isaakios II and other Byzantines): “Korrados was beautiful to behold and comely in his gracefulness, attained the strongest and highest degree of bravery and sagacity and was at the height of his bodily strength.”<sup>28</sup> This characterization echoes contemporary imperial propaganda concerning the capture of Frederick Barbarossa's chancellor Christian of Mainz (1179), which credited the imperial ally Conrad for this success and ascribed it to Latin virtues that were lauded in the Greek literature of the time. The *Historia*, most notably the latest version, describes the emperors from Manouel I to 1204, and the Angeloi in particular, as sorely lacking these virtues, whereas encomia regularly ascribe them to these same emperors with various nuances.<sup>29</sup> Choniates's portrayal of Conrad is, therefore, one of numerous cases of his implicit praise of non-Byzantines for conforming more to aristocratic and imperial ideals than did emperors and Byzantine aristocrats.

24 Brand (1968), pp. 18–20.

25 Brand (1968), p. 80; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1574, pp. 291–292.

26 Brand (1968), pp. 80–82.

27 Brand (1968), p. 84.

28 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 201(93–95): “Κορράδος, καλὸς ὧν ἰδεῖν καὶ τὴν ὥραν εὐπρεπῆς, ἀνδρείας τε καὶ συνέσεως ἕς ὅτι κράτιστον καὶ ἀκρότατον ἦκων καὶ ἀκμάζων ῥώμῃ σώματος.” For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

29 See below and Ch. 12, pp. 351–357, as well as Simpson (2013), pp. 145–213, for Choniates's criticism of emperors and other contemporary fellow Byzantines. See also section 7 of Ch. 15, which discusses Choniates's portrayal of Isaakios II in encomia in comparison with the encomiastic praise of Frederick Barbarossa and the harsh criticism of Isaakios in the history.

This implicit criticism of fellow Byzantines through the description of Conrad is further developed in Choniates's account of the second rebellion of the general Alexios Branas in 1187. According to the *Historia*, the emperor Isaakios was persuaded by the “rebukes of the *kaisar* Korrados” to resist the rebel,<sup>30</sup> which implies Isaakios's ineptitude. Conrad then receives more praise:

This man was an Italian by birth and was born to a father who ruled over the land of Montferrat. He distinguished himself by his manly valor and intelligence, so much so that he was not only renowned among the Romans—and most of all in the eyes of the emperor Manouel, who was very fond of listening to him, for he was endowed with good fortune, sharpness of mind and energetic hands—but he was also very famous with his own people.<sup>31</sup>

Choniates then recounts again how Conrad defeated and captured Christian of Mainz, and notes Conrad's refusal to release him unless Manouel ordered it.<sup>32</sup> Whatever occurred, the historian may have been influenced by the claims of Conrad or Manouel, or those of court orators.<sup>33</sup> The many and fanciful descriptions of Conrad's deeds in contemporary Latin chronicles certainly confirm that he was renowned in the West even before he went to the Holy Land.<sup>34</sup> An accomplished Westerner who came to Romania and surpassed in virtue, loyalty, and ability, and even in personal combat,<sup>35</sup> both the emperor and Branas—the latter being “the most able [Byzantine] general of his time” in the a-version of Choniates's history<sup>36</sup>—was, therefore, an ideal figure to shame and denigrate the historian's fellow Byzantines, who took their superiority for granted in literary representations, notably in imperial encomia. Choniates's

30 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 382(60–61).

31 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 382(62–67): “Ἦν δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτος τὸ μὲν γένος Ἰταλιώτης, πατὴρ δ' ἐξέφυ τοῦ τὴν χώραν τῆς Μόντης Φεράντης κατέχοντος. τοσοῦτον δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρεία καὶ συνέσει διέφερεν, ὥστε οὐ παρὰ Ἑωμαίοις μόνον ἦν περιώνυμος καὶ μάλιστα τῷ βασιλεῖ Μανουὴλ ἐπιπόθητον ἄκουσμα ὡς φύσεως λαχὼν εὐκληρίαν καὶ διανοίας ὀξύτητα καὶ χειρῶν δραστηριότητα, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ὁμογενέσιν αὐτῷ περικλείεστος.”

32 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 382(67–73).

33 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 373, n. 125 (p. 718). See also Ch. 12, pp. 343–344.

34 Haberstumpf (2002), pp. 138, 143.

35 See below, pp. 178–179.

36 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 376(28–30): “[Branas was] of short stature, colossal, however, with respect to his insidious inclination and cunning mind as well as the most able [Byzantine] commander of his time” (βραχὺς μὲν τὴν ἡλικίαν, κολοσσιαῖος δὲ τὸ ὑποκαθήμενον τῆς γνῶμης καὶ τὸ πανοῦργον τοῦ φρονήματος καὶ τῶν τότε πάντων στρατηγικώτερος).

intention in this may have been to provoke fellow *Rōmaioi* to resolve to work together against the forces threatening Romania rather than quarrel with each other, and to prove their courage in warfare, both during the reign of Alexios III, difficult as it was, and more dramatically against the Latin conquerors after 1204.

Choniates's subsequent remarks indicate that Conrad was a valuable asset to Isaakios. That he, after the death of his brother William Longsword (d. 1177), was the heir to the margravate of Montferrat is alluded to: "the alternative task [of the embassy seemed] by far better than the [original] task,"<sup>37</sup> since Boniface, the younger of the two surviving sons of the Marquess William and the initial candidate to marry Theodora Angelina, had remarried before the arrival of the Byzantine envoys. Moreover, Choniates stresses that Conrad had won renown as a general, which certainly was of importance to Isaakios who needed able and loyal commanders against the uprising of Petros and Asen. Given the instability during his rule, Isaakios likely hoped to counterbalance the power of the aristocracy by relying on Latins in the fashion of his predecessor Manouel, whom he imitated in many regards.<sup>38</sup> Conrad was bound to the emperor through ties of kinship, becoming Isaakios's brother-in-law; if Choniates is to be believed, however, Isaakios quickly began to call his loyalty into question.<sup>39</sup>

The description of the struggle against Branas is heavily marked by the contrast between Isaakios's lethargy and negligence and Conrad's steadfast resolve to defeat the usurper. It even includes a passage describing how Conrad confronted and blamed the emperor:

[Conrad] never ceased to stimulate the emperor's courage [...], already exhausted and sunken to despicable slackness, and he became like a whetstone for the emperor's war blade. The emperor [...] did not devote any attention to the war, attaching all his hopes to the armor of the spirit. He [Conrad], however, often stung him, waking him up, like a crab does with a pinna [mussel] [...], persuading him to [...] concern himself with the armies [...]. Continuously hit by the words of the *kaisar* as if by an ox-goad, he [Isaakios] finally came to his senses, awoke from his torpor

37 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 382(78–79): "καὶ τὸ πάρεργον τοῦ ἔργου μείζον κατὰ πολὺ." On this popular proverb, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 375, n. 128 (p. 718).

38 Lilie (1984b), pp. 75–76. For Isaakios's imitation of and association with Manouel, see Ch. 3, p. 146.

39 See below.

and apathy, and started to assemble an auxiliary force [...]. Korrados displayed such a zeal for the ruler that all considered him a gift sent by God and bestowed upon the emperor at the right time. Once he attended to the emperor when he was eating and said with a sigh: “Oh, if only you cared for the ongoing war as much as you are hastening to feast, desiring greedily the dishes lying before you and devoting your full attention to the served food.”<sup>40</sup>

Conrad is also singled out in the description of the short battle between Isaakios's and Branas's forces. The focus on the glorification of the general Conrad is introduced by the detailed description of his extraordinary armor, which indicates that such armor was hardly known in Romania and was probably uncommon in the West as well.<sup>41</sup> Branas's soldiers are portrayed as cowardly, fleeing upon sight of Conrad's troops, whom he had recruited among the Latins residing in Constantinople:<sup>42</sup> “Branas's troops did not even endure the first onslaught of Korrados's infantry nor the roaring attack of the riders. They turned their back and dispersed. The other divisions, frightened by this, turned to flight, too.”<sup>43</sup> The rebel general, however, is described as more courageous than his troops, encouraging them in vain to fight and singling out Conrad for personal combat, wherein Branas missed his target as Conrad struck him in

40 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 383(81)–384(25): “οὐ διέλιπε τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως διανιστῶν φρόνημα [...], ἀπεσβηκὸς ἤδη καὶ εἰς ἀγεννῆ καταβληθὲν χαλαρότητα, καὶ ὡσπερ ἀκόνη τῷ βασιλεῖ πρὸς τὸν τοῦ πολέμου ξυρὸν γινόμενος. [...] βασιλεὺς [...] τῶν δὲ κατὰ πόλεμον ἡτημέλει παντάπασι τὰς ἐλπίδας ἀπάσας ἐπανάπτων τῇ παντευχίᾳ τοῦ Πνεύματος· ὁ δὲ, ὡς ὁ καρκίνος τὴν πίνναν, πολλὰκις τοῦτον διύπνιζε καὶ ὑπονύττων διανίστα, πείθων [...] στρατῶν ἐπιμέλεσθαι [...]. Οἷς δὴ τοῦ καίσαρος λόγοις καθάπερ ἐνδελεχῶς βουπλήγι τιτρώμενος ἀνένηψέ τε τοῦ κάρου καὶ τῆς ἀκηδίας μεθήρμοστο καὶ ἤρξατο συλλέγειν συμμαχικόν. [...] τοσαύτην δ' ὁ Κορράδος ὑπὲρ τοῦ κρατοῦντος εἰσηνέγκατο σπουδῆν, ὥστε θεόπεμπτον ἀγαθὸν κατὰ καιρὸν τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐπιστάν τοῖς ἅπασιν ἐλογίζετο.” Ἔστι δ' ὅτε τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐσθίοντι ἐπιστὰς „εἶθε οὕτως“ ὑποστενάζας εἶρηκε „τῶν κατὰ τὸν ἐφεστῶτα πόλεμον ἐπεμέλου, ὡσπερ γίνῃ τρεχέδειπνος, ἐπὶ τὰ προκείμενα βρώματα λιχνευόμενος καὶ ὄλην τὴν φροντίδα τοῖς παρακενουμένοις διαχαλῶν δαιτρεύμασιν.”

41 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 386(4)–387(7). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 385, n. 148 (p. 722).

42 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 384(14–16), stating that they were 250 in number and that Conrad also recruited 500 Latin foot soldiers. By the spring of 1187, many had returned to the capital after the riots of 1182, a circumstance that points to the importance and attractiveness of Constantinople for Westerners; see Ch. 2, p. 122.

43 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 387(12–16): “οὐδὲ τὴν πρώτην ἔμπρωσιν τοῦ περὶ τὸν Κορράδου ὀπλιτεύοντος πεζικοῦ, οὐδὲ τὴν ῥόθιον ἐπαγωγῆν τῶν ἰππέων οἱ κατὰ τὸν Βρανᾶν ὑπενεγκόντες τὰ νῶτα μεταβαλόντες διασκίδνανται· ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ διαθροηθέντα τάγματα τρέπονται πρὸς φυγὴν.”

the jaw with his lance, thereby unhorsing Branas. The defeat is described as even more shameful: "It is said that Branas, when Korrados first wounded him, pleaded not to die and was terrified of death." The rumor, Choniates adds, was that Conrad showed the general mercy, granting him a quick death. This episode should be contrasted with the description of Isaakios's triumphant pleasure in the sorrow of Branas's widow, a woman highly praised by Choniates.<sup>44</sup> Isaakios is also implicitly criticized for his treatment of Conrad who "was annoyed at the [lack of] generosity on the emperor's part, which did not befit his noble family and did not do justice to his kinship with the emperor."<sup>45</sup>

Choniates slights Isaakios further by stating that Conrad had already taken the cross in the West (σταυροφορήσας) and that he had long before decided to go to Palestine, "which was occupied by the Saracens of Egypt. The bond of matrimony which he had entered into with the emperor's sister was merely a secondary purpose of his journey."<sup>46</sup> Being united with the imperial dynasty is represented as the highest possible honor anyone might aspire to in imperial encomia, and is here described as a secondary matter.<sup>47</sup> Conrad had originally agreed to join the emperor's campaign against the Vlach-Bulgarians, but "the will of God stood against it, namely that the Romans should still suffer misfortune from the Mysians, and his [Conrad's] mind turned to other matters."<sup>48</sup>

The summary of Conrad's exploits in Palestine further reinforces Choniates's narrative of Byzantine decline but also points to common markers of identity: Christianity and military prowess, crusades coming across as a laudable enterprise.<sup>49</sup> "[When Conrad arrived in Tyre] He was seen and accommodated by his people there like a higher authority."<sup>50</sup> The description of Conrad's death, preceded by a short mention of the capture of Acre (1191) and other

44 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 387(17–29), 388(59)–389(73); see p. 387(26–27): "φασὶ δὲ ὡς ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ ὑπὸ Κορράδου τραθῆναι τὴν τελευτὴν πτοηθεὶς ἰκετηρίασε Βρανᾶς μὴ τεθνᾶναι."

45 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 394(33)–395(39); see p. 395(37–39): "Ὁ δὲ δυσχεραίνων προδῆλως πρὸς ἦν εὐρατο ἐκ βασιλείως φιλοφροσύνην ὡς τῷ ἑαυτοῦ γένει ἀπάδουσαν καὶ τῷ βασιλείῳ κήδει ἀσύμφωνον."

46 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 395(41–44); see p. 395(42–44): "ἤδη κατασχεθεῖσαν ὑπὸ τῶν κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον Σαρακηνῶν, καὶ πάρεργον ὁδοῦ τὴν μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιτέλεσας συνάφειαν."

47 See, for example, Ch. 3, pp. 144, 153, 169.

48 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 395(44–47); see p. 395(45–47): "ὡς δ' ἀντέκρουσε τὸ βεβουλεῦσθαι θεὸν κακοτυχεῖν Ῥωμαίους ὑπὸ Μυσῶν, ἐπ' ἄλλοις τρέπει τὸν νοῦν."

49 This concurs with Byzantine assessments of crusading summarized at the beginning of Ch. 10. On Conrad in the Holy Land, see Jacoby (1993; 2006).

50 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 395(48–50); see p. 395(49–50): "παρὰ τῶν ἐκεῖσε ὁμογενῶν ὡς οἶά τις κρείττων ὀραθεὶς καὶ προσδεχθεὶς δύναμις."

cities in the Holy Land,<sup>51</sup> is a final occasion for commending him and his fellow crusaders, as well as indirectly blaming Isaakios and fellow Byzantines for their failures, cowardice and lack of virtue in war:

But because it had been decided [by God] that things there [in the Holy Land] would go ill as well, many other good and noble commanders, who, using their personal funds, had readily undertaken this campaign for Christ, perished, and he [Conrad] himself was killed by a Chasisian [assassin], he survived for a short time and long enough in order to let the Hagarenes [Muslims] experience and admire his bravery and sagacity.<sup>52</sup>

This passage praising the selflessness of the crusaders and their devotion to their cause can be contrasted with Choniates's censure of Byzantine aristocrats: lacking remorse, they thought it unnecessary to go to the patriarch and do penance for perjury and support of Alexios Branas, and they worked against the commendable Frederick Barbarossa on his crusade.<sup>53</sup> It might also allude to the low esteem in which Isaakios was held at Saladin's court, for unflattering comments about the *basileus's* political relevance are preserved in Arabic sources.<sup>54</sup> The imperial official Choniates conceivably knew of this low esteem.

51 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 395(50–52). Concerning Choniates's confusion of Ioppe (Jaffa) with Ake (Acre), see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 407, n. 9 (p. 725).

52 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 395(52–56): “ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὅτι καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ πάσχειν κακῶς ἀφώριστο, ἄλλοι τε καλοὶ καὶ γενναῖοι ἀπώλοντο στρατηγοὶ τὴν κατὰ Χριστὸν ἐκόντως καὶ οἰκείους ὀψωνίοις πορείαν στειλάμενοι, καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ἀναιρεῖται ὑπὸ Χασισίου μικρὸν τι ἐπιβιούς καὶ ὅσον πείραν τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀνδρείας τε καὶ φρονήσεως δοῦναι τοῖς Ἀγαρηνοῖς καὶ θαυμασθῆναι.”

53 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 390(12–25). For Choniates's account of the passage of Frederick's crusade, see Chs. 12 and 15 (section 7).

54 Beihammer (2007).

## The Integration of Princes into the Imperial Hierarchy

### 1 Tentative Heir, Client Ruler, Ally: Alexios/Βελᾶς (Bela)

The case of Alexios-Bela is peculiar for several reasons. Firstly, this Hungarian prince was the only individual born abroad to be designated heir to the throne in the Komnenian period. Secondly, he is representative of Western individuals who migrated to Romania, some of whom remained and were integrated into the military, aristocracy, and court society.<sup>1</sup>

The encomiastic Kinnamos introduces Bela in the context of Manouel's ambitions toward Hungary in the 1160s: "He [Manouel] desired with all his might to lay claim to the Hunnic [kingdom], which is situated in the border land to the Western peoples. He therefore intended to unite in marriage Belas, who was Iatzas's [Geza's] son after Stephanos, to his own daughter Maria."<sup>2</sup> The passage highlights the significance of Hungary as a western border and buffer area for Romania in the twelfth century and its function in strengthening Byzantine rule in the Balkans, during a time in which the military ambitions of Frederick I Barbarossa were regarded as a major threat. Asserting Byzantine hegemony in Hungary was therefore a major political goal of Manouel I.<sup>3</sup>

The marriage negotiations are mentioned only in passing, but the arrangement again points to attitudes of superiority and an expectation upon non-Byzantines to adapt to Byzantine cultural standards. Kinnamos implies that lands assigned to Bela by his royal father motivated the emperor to consider a marriage alliance with his only surviving child, Maria, since those lands would further imperial influence over Hungary. Things progressed smoothly according to the historiographer. The Hungarian prince was expected to submit to Byzantine expectations and customs if he aspired to become Manouel's successor. This is expressed in his willingness to come to Romania at a young age

1 On Byzantine-Hungarian relations during the twelfth century, see the references cited in Ch. 13, p. 365, n. 1.

2 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 214(21)–215(2): "Οὐννικῆς γὰρ δυνάμει τῇ πάσῃ [...] μεταποιεῖσθαι ἤθελεν ἐν μεταίχμιῳ τῶν ἐσπερίων κειμένης ἐθνῶν. Βελᾶν τοίνυν δς μετὰ Στέφανον τῷ Ἰατζῆ παῖς ἦν, Μαρίαν τῇ αὐτοῦ θυγατρὶ συνάψαι πρὸς γάμον διενοήθη."

3 Magdalino (1993b), p. 80.

in order to prepare for his future role, as well as by his renaming: “the youth [he was in his teens] then received the name Alexios and was hailed as despot.”<sup>4</sup> As in the case of Ioannes-Renier of Montferrat and the empresses, the name Bela might not have appeared in Byzantine literary sources had he stayed in Romania.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike Renier and Conrad of Montferrat, Bela received a newly crafted title, that of despot (δεσπότης), which underlined the peculiar political circumstances of his elevation. This is to be seen in connection with the situation of Manouel, in his forties and still without a male heir and facing the possibility that his daughter’s husband would succeed him. Although Bela may not have been designated heir to the Hungarian throne, his claim certainly carried political weight, which Kinnamos implies by mentioning the marriage negotiations immediately after Manouel’s claim to overlordship of Hungary.<sup>6</sup> As argued convincingly by Magdalino, an imperial oration composed by Michael of Anchialos, the future patriarch Michael III, and delivered shortly before 6 January 1166, suggests that, at least by 1165, it was imperial policy either to have the Hungarian ruler accept the status of a subordinate or, more likely, to install Bela as client king in a similar manner to the rulers of Serbia, Jerusalem, and Antioch. The peace treaty of 1165, which marked a provisional Byzantine victory, was taken as Hungarian acceptance of this status.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the title of despot may have been chosen because of its proximity to the Hungarian title *urum* (lord), which was held by Hungarian heirs to the throne. Accordingly, in keeping with their inclination to adapt or assimilate non-Byzantine institutions, the Byzantines stressed both Alexios’s status in Romania and his Hungarian claim.<sup>8</sup>

Kinnamos also indicates Bela’s influence with the emperor while cultivating the latter’s image. When, after a recent victory, Manouel contemplated the execution of captured Hungarian commanders as a punishment for their king’s violation of a peace treaty, Bela successfully petitioned the emperor to

4 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 215(2–11); see p. 215(10–11): “ὁ τε παῖς Ἀλέξιος ἤδη μετωνομάσθη καὶ δεσπότης ἀνεβόηθη.” On Bela’s dominion, a considerable apanage, and its extent, see Makk (1989), pp. 77–78. It is also mentioned in the context of a truce between Manouel and Stephen III, and the former’s dealings with the rival King Stephen IV: see IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 224(19–20); Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1455, p. 242.

5 Is there a reason to think that Bela “lost” the name Alexios, as claimed by Thoma (1985), p. 89? Kinnamos may refer to him as Bela because he eventually became king of Hungary under that name.

6 Magdalino (1993b), p. 79; Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997), p. 234.

7 Magdalino (1993b), p. 81.

8 Thoma (1985), p. 87.



spare the lives of the prisoners.<sup>9</sup> The passage appears to allude to Manouel's imperial virtues: appropriate anger tempered by mercy and a willingness to listen to a subject's plea. Again referring to his importance, Kinnamos cites the prince's claim to Dalmatia as strengthening the legitimacy of its occupation by Byzantine troops.<sup>10</sup> Later, Alexios-Bela was to act as a commander in the renewed war against Hungary.<sup>11</sup>

The treatment of the termination of Alexios-Bela's betrothal to Maria due to the birth of Manouel's son also strongly reflects the introspective concerns of Choniates and Kinnamos.<sup>12</sup> Kinnamos alleges that the termination was necessary for reasons of consanguinity. He avoids any impression that Manouel was unwise in designating his prospective son-in-law as heir presumptive when the birth of a male heir was still possible, a factor that Choniates criticizes strongly.<sup>13</sup> As compensation, in order to ensure good relations with him should he become king of Hungary, Bela was married to the *basileus's* sister-in-law Agnes of Châtillon, named Anna in Byzantium. Kinnamos passes over the Hungarian prince's demotion from despot to *kaisar* and attempts to cast it in a positive light: "After he had been proclaimed *kaisar*, he excelled in rank the greatest then in Byzantion [Constantinople]."<sup>14</sup>

Marrying a relative of the *basileus* and receiving a title maintained Bela's acceptance of Manouel's superiority, as was the case for several Western rulers during the reigns of Manouel, his father, and grandfather.<sup>15</sup> That the Hungarian king and his realm were under imperial hegemony was the official stance of Manouel and his successors, as orations by Manasses, Eustathios, and Choniates suggest.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Manouel's victory in 1165 stipulated that the

9 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 245(12–18).

10 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 248(19)–249(9).

11 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 259(23)–260(15), also mentioned on p. 268(10–14); see Makk (1989), pp. 90, 97.

12 For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

13 Consanguinity was certainly no impediment, but it served Kinnamos and most probably Manouel as an excuse for this political decision. A prohibition on marriage between relatives of the seventh degree may have been introduced in 1166 to have a pretext to call off the engagement. While it did not apply technically to Maria and Alexios-Bela, it might still have been successfully employed to legitimize this course of action. See Magdalino (1993b), p. 215; Farkas (2004), pp. 370–373.

14 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 286(19)–287(6); see p. 287(5–6): "καίσαρ δὲ διὰ τοῦτο ἀναρρηθείς ἀξιώματι τῶν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ τῆνικᾶδε ἐκρατίστευε μεγιστάνων." The marriage to Anna-Agnes of Châtillon can be dated to ca. 1170 according to Makk (1989), p. 106.

15 Stephenson (2000), pp. 268–270.

16 KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Encomium of 1173*, esp. pp. 92(147–149): Manouel as "supreme ruler" [δεσπότης] of the "Pannonians", 93(160): "the land of the Pannonians is subject [...] to us" (γῆ Παννόνων δουλεύει [...] ἡμῖν), 96(276–279): "the Pannonians [...]"

Hungarian crown would be subject to the emperor's superiority.<sup>17</sup> According to Kinnamos's account, the union with the emperor's sister-in-law was intended to permanently tie Hungary politically to Romania; additionally, before being accompanied to Hungary for his coronation, Bela had to swear an oath to always act in the emperor's interest.<sup>18</sup> Kinnamos thus omits the circumstances of the termination of the engagement in favor of making Manouel's successes in Hungary appear all the more splendid.<sup>19</sup>

Whereas Bela's function in Kinnamos's encomiastic narrative is mainly to underline and confirm Manouel's hegemony over Hungary, he plays a rather different role in Choniates's *Historia*. In his characteristic manner, the portrayal of Bela is introduced abruptly in connection with the criticism of the emperor's treatment of the guardian of the imperial inkstand, Theodoros Styppeiotēs, who, according to Choniates, was unjustly accused of treason and blinded.<sup>20</sup> Unlike Kinnamos, Choniates mentions the oath to Maria and Alexios (Bela) in the church of Blachernai (in late 1165 or early 1166).<sup>21</sup> Alexios's

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bent their necks" (οἱ Πάνωνες [...] τοὺς αὐχένας υπέκλιναν), 97(305)–98(334): "you saw this people, this land, this country [Hungary] reduced to servitude and you flogged it, as it was previously in resistance [to your rule]" (τοῦτο το ἔθνος, τοῦτον τὸν χώρον, ταύτην τὴν γῆν καὶ νῦν καταδουλουμένην ἐσκέπασας καὶ πρὶν ἀντιταττομένην ἐμάστιξας). EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Orations, no. 16, p. 263(73–76): "I have come to know the [...] Paionians [...] and they are accustomed to be equally subjected to servitude, but there are more than a few who are enrolled among our own slavish subjects, whom you yourself, after acquiring them as prisoners of war, have honored with servitude" (ἔχω μαθὼν [...] Παίονες [...] καὶ οὗτοι ἐθάδες ὁμόδουλοι μὲν, οὐκ ὀλίγοι δὲ καὶ εἰς δούλους ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ἐγγεγραμμένοι, οὓς αὐτὸς αἰχμαλωσίᾳ παραστησάμενος τῷ δουλεύειν τετίμηκας). See also *ibid.*, no. 13, pp. 214(16)–215(23): "Just lately another [king besides Amalric of Jerusalem] has been sent from us to the northern lands of the Paionians, ruling no lesser country, but rather an immense [area], so that other kings might be sent to us to see the emperor and have their own power confirmed, and they ask us to provide kings from among our number so that there may be other leaders, ruling over those who are under them, and that our emperor may be king of kings and the emperor of everything over them, which is a very great and notable thing" (ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἕναρχος ἕτερος τοῖς βορείοις τῶν Παιόνων μέρεσιν ἔσταλται οὐδὲν ἐλάττονος γῆς ἄρχων, εἰ μὴ καὶ μᾶλλον ἀπείρονος, ἵνα καὶ βασιλεῖς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς στέλλονται τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων ὀψόμενοι αὐτοκράτορα καὶ τὸ κράτος αὐτοῖς ἐπισφραγισόμενοι, καὶ βασιλεῖς αὐθὶς ἀφ' ἡμῶν θεραπεύειν ἐπιταττόμενοι, ὡς εἶναι τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἀρχηγούς ἄρχοντας ἐπὶ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτοῖς, τὸν δὲ ἡμέτερον αὐτοκράτορα βασιλέων βασιλέα καὶ παμβασιλέα ἐπ' ἐκείνους, ὃ δὴ μέγιστόν τε καὶ ἐξοχώτατον). For Choniates's orations, see below, pp. 192–193.

17 MICHAEL OF ANCHIALOS, Inaugural Lecture, pp. 202–203 (esp. p. 203(69–71); see Browning's commentary, *ibid.*, p. 214; Magdalino (1993b), p. 81; Angold (1997), p. 208.

18 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 286(19)–287(11).

19 See also IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 215, n. 35 (p. 257).

20 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 112(64)–113(74).

21 Zorzi (2012), p. 178.

designation as heir to the throne is mentioned twice, first in the Styppieotes passage and then in a more extensive passage in Book V:

As Manouel had not yet sired a son, but based the succession of his family on his daughter Maria, whom his wife from the Alamanni had given birth to, he obliged all by means of oaths to accept after his death as heirs to his empire the same Maria and her promised husband Alexios, who, as we have said, had come from Hungary, and to submit and make obeisance to them as rulers of the Romans. All others then bowed to the orders and delivered their oaths, as the ruler commanded; Andronikos was the only one to refrain from [delivering his oath] and said that “the emperor, having married a second time, will have male children, I presume, and if we later entrust the affairs of the realm to the emperor’s son by means of oaths, we, having recently given pledges to the daughter, will be constrained not to keep our oath.” And [he] also [said]: “With what kind of madness has God beset the emperor that he judges every Roman to be unworthy of his girl’s marriage bed, but prefers that this intruder who is of a different people reigns to the disgrace of Romans over Romans and towers above all as their lord?” But Andronikos, by saying these useful things, did not manage to persuade the emperor, who made light of his words as hummings of an obstinate man who holds contrary opinions. Those present, after having sworn the oaths, were of the same opinion as Andronikos: some made their thoughts known at once, others even took the liberty of speaking bluntly and maintained that it would not be something beneficial nor wholly to the advantage of the emperor’s daughter nor truly the [empire] of the Romans to bud a branch from a plant of a different kind on a most abundant olive and prefer it to the others for the assumption of power.<sup>22</sup>

22 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 137(66–88): “μήπω δὲ γεννήσας ὁ Μανουήλ υἰόν, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ Μαρίᾳ, ἣν αὐτῷ ἡ ἐξ Ἀλαμανῶν ἀπέτεκεν ἄλοχος, τὰς τοῦ γένους σαλεύων διαδοχάς, ὄρκους πάντας κατενεπέδωσε μετὰ τὸν αὐτοῦ μόρον αὐτὴν τε τὴν Μαρίαν καὶ τὸν μνηστορα ταύτης Ἀλέξιον, ὅς, ὡς εἰρήκειμεν, ἐξ Οὐγγρίας ὤρμητο, κληρονόμους τῆς οἰκείας ἔχειν ἀρχῆς καὶ ὡς Ῥωμαίων ἀναξί σφισι καθυπείκειν καὶ προσκυνεῖν. ἔνθα οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι πάντες τοῖς ἐπιτετραμμένοις ὑπέκυπτον καὶ τοὺς ὄρκους, ὡς ὁ κρατῶν ἐκέλευεν, ἀπεδίδοσαν· ἄλλοι δ’ ἦν ἀποδυσπετῶν Ἀνδρόνικος φάσκων ὡς „ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς δευτέρους ἀποκλίνας γάμους ἀρρενοτοκήσει δῆπουθεν καὶ πιστουμένους ἡμᾶς τῷ ὑστέρῳ τόκῳ τοῦ βασιλέως τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς δι’ ὄρκων ἐσπέπειτα ἀνάγκη τῇ θυγατρὶ ἀρτίως ὄρκια διδόντας μὴ εὐορκεῖν.“ καὶ ἄλλως δὲ „τίς ἢ τῷ βασιλεὶ θεοβλάβεια, ὡς πάντα μὲν Ῥωμαίων τοῦ θυγατρίου κρίνειν ἀπόλεκτρον, τὸν δ’ ἄλλογενῆ καὶ παρῆγγραπτον τουτονὶ εἰς ὄνειδος Ῥωμαίοις Ῥωμαίων βασιλεύειν προκεκρίσθαι καὶ ὑπερκαθῆσθαι ὄλων ὡς κύριον;“ ἀλλ’ οὐκ εἶχε λέξας τὰ χρηστά. ταῦτα τὸν βασιλεῖα πειθόμενον, ἀθερίζοντα τὰ λεγόμενα ὡς ἀνδρὸς ἀντιδοξούντος καὶ ἰσχυρογνώμονος τερετίσματα. εἰσὶ δ’ οἱ

From a modern perspective, especially that of the nation state with its categories of “foreigners” and “nationals,” this passage could be taken as evidence of “xenophobia” in the Byzantine court in the 1160s.<sup>23</sup> However, such a hypothesis is based entirely on the account of Choniates, who wrote more than thirty years after the event with the intention to identify causes of decline in imperial history. Accordingly, the *Historia* praises Manouel for ruling wisely in his early reign but is more critical of his later years. Requiring this oath of the Byzantine aristocracy is therefore implicitly an expression of both his vanity and his tendency to exploit his authority and treat “those in his power not like free [individuals], but like servants which one can inherit.”<sup>24</sup> It also provides an opportunity to emphasize, as does Kinnamos, the rivalry between Andronikos Komnenos and his imperial cousin, with Manouel motivated by a concern to limit the possibilities of aristocratic pretenders to the throne, such as Andronikos.<sup>25</sup> If Andronikos acted and spoke as Choniates describes, he did so out of a desire to destabilize Manouel’s rule and the potential future rule of Alexios and Maria. However, his criticism of the rashness of the decision had a solid basis insofar as Manouel could still have sons and Alexios-Bela was not yet married to Maria.<sup>26</sup>

Given the scarcity in middle Greek literature of disapproving comments about a person’s non-Byzantine origin once they had conformed to Byzantine expectations and were properly integrated, this passage is not necessarily “anti-Western” or “xenophobic”; opposition was more probably directed against Bela’s lack of integration in the Byzantine aristocracy and imperial dynasty rather than his origin. The Hungarian prince was still unfamiliar, having resided in Romania for only two years at this point,<sup>27</sup> and was likely more influenced by his Hungarian upbringing than his stay in Romania. As a

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μετὰ τοὺς ὄρκους Ἀνδρονίκῳ γεγόνασι σύμψηφοι· καὶ οἱ μὲν αὐτόθεν τὸ δοκοῦν ἀπεφάναντο, οἱ δὲ καὶ τῷ λέγειν ἐφέντες ἀγωνιστικῶς κατεσκευάσαν μῆθ’ ὄλως τῇ θυγατρὶ τοῦ βασιλέως, μήτε μὴν τῷ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ξυνοῖσον εἶναι πληρώματι τὸν ἐκ φυταλιᾶς ἑτεροφύλου ῥάδαμονο εἰς καλλιέλαιον μετεγχευτρίζειν πῖοτατον καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἀναζώσασθαι τὸ κράτος τῶν ἄλλων προτίθεσθαι.”

23 Cf., e.g., the assessment of Makk (1989), p. 97 and n. 12, or Angold (1997), p. 254: “the emperor’s nomination of the Hungarian Bela as his successor divided the court along pro- and anti-Latin lines.”

24 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 60(35–44); see p. 60(37–38): “τοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρα οὐχ ὡς ἔλευθέροις, ἀλλ’ ὡς κληρωτοῖς θεράπουσι”; see also Simpson (2013), p. 151.

25 Makk (1989), pp. 96–97.

26 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 17, n. 44 (p. 556–557); Zorzi (2012), pp. 211–212.

27 After an agreement had been reached between Manouel and Stephen III, Bela resided in Romania from late 1163. See Makk (1989), p. 86.

newcomer, he had already been raised to the unprecedented rank of despot, outranking all men at court except the emperor. It is plausible, therefore, that this caused resentment and envy in aristocratic circles and that Andronikos thus spoke for an influential faction at court.

The plan to make a youth born abroad and without roots in the Byzantine aristocracy heir presumptive was a delicate matter given the fragile balance of the Komnenian political order. The balance depended on the acceptance of the authority of the emperor as supreme head of the aristocratic clans which were often related to the imperial family. Manouel relied on men from abroad precisely because they were more reliably interested in serving him than Byzantine aristocrats, provided they were adequately compensated, and could thus support his efforts to rule more independently. In the cases of empresses of Latin origin (with the exception of Eirene-Bertha) and the Aleramici brothers, there are no indications that their origins disqualified them from occupying places at court, and they seem to have been perfectly acceptable to the Byzantines. Had Alexios-Bela remained longer in Byzantium and made efforts to conciliate the aristocracy by bestowing favors and forming ties of kinship, and had Manouel not hoped still to have sons, he would probably have been acceptable to the aristocracy. The concept of forgetting about one's origins and fully embracing a Byzantine-Roman culture and identity appears in several contemporary orations.<sup>28</sup> Accordingly, Choniates's quotation of Andronikos's words in this context seem more a commentary on socio-political considerations than evidence for an "anti-Western" faction.

Additionally, Choniates, like other literati such as Georgios Tornikes, opposed the appointment of officials who lacked the literati's high culture; it threatened to reduce the number of available posts, as well as the prestige they hoped for. Military aristocrats held a similar attitude towards outsiders such as Bela, at least until they became full members of aristocratic circles. The evidence for numerous individuals and families of Latin, Turkish, and other descent, who fully integrated into the imperial family or aristocratic society, demonstrates this.<sup>29</sup> Choniates would have been inclined to express acceptance of their feelings toward this outsider, as he does when he describes Manouel's efforts to find a new husband for Maria: "He made light of those among the Romans who

28 See Ch. 2, p. 134, Ch. 3, pp. 143–144, 147, 153 and 169.

29 Besides the previously discussed empresses of Latin origin, with the possible exception of Eirene-Bertha, one might name the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene and her sister-in-law, both of whom may well have been of Norman origin, the Axouchoi, of Turkish descent, as well as aristocratic families of Western origin such as the Petraliphai or the Rogerioi: see Ch. 1, pp. 27–28, the third section of Ch. 7, and Ch. 15, pp. 417–418.

were expected [to desire] a marriage [to Maria], carefully selecting rulers of other peoples [for negotiations].”<sup>30</sup> The opposition, of course, might also have pertained to political concerns about Hungary.

There is evidence that, from the ceremony in Blachernai until the birth of Alexios (II), Bela was regarded not only as heir presumptive but as a sort of co-emperor. His elevation to the rank of despot was probably connected with the ceremony. The synodal documents of 1166 attest to his attendance as the emperor’s son-in-law (γαμβρός), and a charter of 1167 suggests that he might have enjoyed the status of co-ruler. At the same time, Manouel, confronted with the threat posed by Frederick Barbarossa in Italy, kept his options open, exploring the possibility of a betrothal between Maria and William II of Sicily in 1166.<sup>31</sup>

In the following book, Choniates tells of the birth of Manouel’s son and heir, the purple-born Alexios (on 14 September 1169), which entailed the transfer of oaths from “the Paion Alexios” and Maria to Alexios. It led, as Choniates also states, to the termination of the betrothal and Alexios-Bela’s marriage instead to the emperor’s sister-in-law Agnes of Châtillon, named Anna by the Byzantines. Contrary to Kinnamos’s allegation, the engagement is not said to have ended for reasons of consanguinity, but because Manouel intended to arrange a more advantageous alliance for his daughter.<sup>32</sup> The death of Stephen (III) of Hungary in 1172 presented Manouel with the opportunity to assist Alexios-Bela in becoming king, to the benefit of the empire. Choniates, however, omits the guarantees to Romania and Manouel personally mentioned by Kinnamos, probably because he had no desire to emphasize the emperor’s successes with respect to Hungary and Dalmatia. On the contrary, the a-version of the history criticizes the emperor’s superstitious belief in astrology, which, it says, would have prevented the decisive victory against Hungary in 1167 had

30 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 170(23–24): “Ρωμαίων ἀθερίζων ὅσοι πρὸς γάμον ἐπίδοξοι ἐφιλοκρίνει τοὺς δυνάστας ἐθνῶν.”

31 Makk (1989), pp. 98–99; Magdalino (1993b), p. 505.

32 From 1167, the territories that Manouel had hoped to gain by means of the union between Bela and Maria were under his dominion. That also rendered the match less appealing, and the birth of a son made the prospect of a unification of Hungary with Romania quite improbable. Had Bela become king as the husband of the purple-born Maria, he might later have used his wife’s claim as a pretext to threaten the rule of Manouel’s son. Moreover, Manouel could still tie Alexios-Bela to himself and ensure that his lands remained under Byzantine hegemony by arranging a marriage between him and the empress’s sister. On the termination of the betrothal, see also Makk (1989), p. 106; and see above, p. 183.

the general Andronikos Kontostephanos obeyed the emperor's command to postpone the battle.<sup>33</sup>

The suggestion by both historiographers that the establishment of Bela's rule went without incident<sup>34</sup> contradicts, however, what is reported by other sources, notably the quarrel with the archbishop of Esztergom about the right to crown the Hungarian king. From the perspective of Kinnamos and Choniates, both writing with hindsight, this was an insignificant detail because Bela eventually managed to consolidate his rule. By contrast, Isaakios II's letter to Pope Celestine III emphasizes the Byzantine effort under Manouel to support the establishment of Bela's accession, assisting him with troops and resources to obtain the crown. Bela is said to have achieved this only with difficulty. The letter also insists on corresponding guarantees made not only to Manouel but also to Isaakios upon marrying Bela's daughter Maria-Margaret.<sup>35</sup>

Bela respected his oath during Manouel's lifetime, and after his accession to the throne is mentioned again only in connection with the regency for Alexios II. Kinnamos reveals, without referring to Bela, that he even sent auxiliary troops to assist Manouel in the campaign against the Turks in 1176.<sup>36</sup> His occupation of Byzantine territory and exploitation of internal political conflicts in Romania after Manouel's death, pillaging the land around Braničevo and Belgrade, pose no reason for Choniates to condemn him.<sup>37</sup> Bela, after all, had reason to invade because his sister-in-law, the dowager empress Maria-Xene, was held prisoner by the usurper Andronikos. He could therefore claim to act in accordance with his oath to Manouel.<sup>38</sup>

33 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 154(43–55); see also Zorzi (2012), pp. 232–233; Simpson (2013), p. 154. See Magdalino (2021); also Grünbart (2021) for the research project on this topic.

34 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 170(15–21).

35 DEMETRIOS TORNIKES, *Letters*, no. 33, p. 343(6–16). On Bela's difficulties in establishing his rule and the considerable Byzantine support he received, see Makk (1989), pp. 107–111; Zorzi (2012), p. 246.

36 See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 299(19–20). That Kinnamos calls the Hungarians "allies" (ξύμμαχοι) and the Serbs "subjects" (κατήκοοι) is relevant insofar as the Hungarian king ranked higher than the Serbian Grand Prince from the perspective of the Byzantine court, but this does not contradict that he was also seen as a subordinate ruler under the emperor's supremacy. Thus, Kinnamos implies that the Hungarians were subordinate, not equal, allies, and the Byzantines could indeed base this point of view on Alexios-Bela's acceptance of a Byzantine title as well as his status as a member of the imperial family. See Makk (1989), pp. 112–113; Stephenson (2000), pp. 268–270.

37 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 267(52–54); see also p. 277(45–47).

38 Brand (1968), p. 47; Makk (1989), pp. 117–118.

Choniates does not mention Bela's occupation of Byzantine Dalmatia and probably also of Sirmion after the emperor's death, which suggests that Manouel or the regents, or both, formally agreed to it.<sup>39</sup> After all, political chaos during the regency is portrayed as so great by both Eustathios and Choniates that it seems a matter of course that the Hungarian king occupied lands that had been acquired only a few years previously when Manouel had been in a relatively strong position, now his widow struggled to hold on to power. Their possession was of minor concern compared to the other difficulties the regents had to deal with.<sup>40</sup>

Choniates does, however, make clear that Bela remained interested in an understanding with Romania. He invaded again shortly before the downfall of Andronikos I, presumably with the intention of strengthening his bargaining position with the empire. As noted by Eustathios, he was encouraged by aristocrats who had been driven into exile by Andronikos.<sup>41</sup> He then agreed to marry his infant daughter to the new emperor Isaakios Angelos, which, Choniates implies, was part of an alliance Isaakios concluded with Bela in response to the Sicilian invasion in 1185.<sup>42</sup> A meeting between the king and his son-in-law Isaakios following a minor victory at the Morava against the Serbian Grand Prince Stephen Nemanja is mentioned.<sup>43</sup> The meeting may be suspected to have resulted in no consequential agreements, because Choniates does not specify what was discussed between the two monarchs.<sup>44</sup> However, he is selective in choosing and privileging the contents of his history, which can be characterized by a few consistent foci. A final consequence of the alliance that Choniates mentions was that Isaakios, after several defeats and failed

39 Stephenson (2000), pp. 282–283.

40 Makk (1989), pp. 115–116.

41 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 56(29–30), where he is referred to as “the king of Hungary” (ὁ τῆς Οὐγγρίας κρᾶλης). The term κρᾶλης originated from the Slavic word *kral'* and was adopted by Byzantine authors only in the middle period. Among other reasons, it seems to have been employed to distinguish the Hungarian monarch from others, which, in addition to allowing for linguistic variety, perhaps points to his political relevance for the Byzantines. See Trapp et al. (2001), sub κρᾶλης.

42 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 368(38–46). On the alliance, see Dölger and Wirth (1995), nos. 1567d–e, p. 287. The letter by Demetrios Tornikes in the name of Isaakios II to Pope Celestine III in 1193 (Dölger and Wirth [1995], no. 1615, p. 314; DEMETRIOS TORNIKES, *Letters*, no. 33) also mentions the alliance and the guarantees made by Bela to both Manouel and, later, Isaakios concerning the Byzantine claim to overlordship of Serbia.

43 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 434(25–35). See also below.

44 An additional reason might be that Choniates was not present at the meetings. See Simpson (2013), p. 57.



campaigns against the Vlachs and Bulgarians, reluctantly sought and received military assistance from his father-in-law.<sup>45</sup>

Even if common interests predominated in the relationship between Hungary and Romania, disagreements concerning the status of Serbia existed, which are passed over in Choniates's account. An imperial letter to Pope Celestine III (1193) explains these disagreements, while addressing the alliance with the Hungarian king, complaining about Bela's invasion of Serbia, and expressing hopes that the question will be resolved in favor of the maintenance of the alliance, for which the emperor emphasizes the importance of the Christian religion common to all involved.<sup>46</sup> The letter was intended to persuade the pope, who entertained good relations with Hungary, to mediate in the matter.<sup>47</sup> Bela was interested both in keeping Isaakios occupied with the Vlacho-Bulgarian rebellion and in asserting his rule in Serbia against Byzantine claims.<sup>48</sup> He later, however, abandoned the Serbian campaign, possibly reaching the conclusion that the cost would outweigh the benefit.<sup>49</sup>

Before Isaakios could march a newly recruited army against the Vlacho-Bulgarian rebels in the spring of 1195, a conspiracy against his rule led to Isaakios's deposition, his blinding<sup>50</sup> and the end of the alliance with Hungary. Although the deposition of Isaakios, like the usurpation of Andronikos, would have justified a Hungarian attack against Byzantium, it did not occur. The balance of power in the Balkans, especially after the crushing defeat of 1194, had shifted so clearly to Romania's disadvantage that Hungary was apparently more interested in supporting the empire against the Vlachs and Bulgarians, or at least remaining neutral. The Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI now threatened to expand his hegemony into the Balkans after his occupation of Sicily, to the detriment not only of Romania but of Hungary. Choniates does not say this explicitly, as it was not very relevant for the purposes of his historiography,

45 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 446(72–75).

46 DEMETRIOS TORNIKES, *Letters*, no. 33, pp. 343(5)–345(4).

47 Makk (1989), p. 121.

48 Brand (1968), p. 94.

49 Alternatively, he was constrained to assist the defense of Zara against a Venetian attack: see Makk (1989), p. 123 (incl. n. 208).

50 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 447(86)–455(63), one of the rare occasions on which Choniates expresses approval of Isaakios as a ruler, who, according to his account, was bound and determined to finally defeat the Vlacho-Bulgarian uprising. In the a-version of the history, the usurpation of Alexios III and his abandonment of the campaign against the Vlachs and Bulgarians are severely censured at the beginning of the following book.

but it can be inferred from his account.<sup>51</sup> Bela might still have had sympathy for Romania, where he had spent a decade of his life.<sup>52</sup>

More than ambition or strategic considerations may have induced him to marry his daughter to Isaakios II and to ask for Theodora Komnene's hand in marriage after the death of his first wife.<sup>53</sup> Apart from Bela's topical characterization in imperial encomia as a barbarian ruler, hardly any disapproving Byzantine comments about his rule can be found.

Neither does Choniates attempt to involve Bela in his denigration of Isaakios. The historiographer could have turned the portrayal of the encomiast on its head, as he did in the case of Frederick Barbarossa. However, while Choniates applauds the virtuous conduct of Conrad of Montferrat and simultaneously casts light on the unworthy behavior of Emperor Isaakios,<sup>54</sup> he may have regarded it as unnecessary to do the same in the case of Bela. After all, he explicitly states at the end of Book IV that he avoids repetition that might bore his readers.<sup>55</sup>

As judge of the veil, he composed an oration commemorating the (minor) victory at the Morava, which occurred in the autumn of 1191 and which Choniates exaggerates in encomiastic fashion.<sup>56</sup> It includes a long passage devoted to Bela, called the "king of the Gepids" (Γηπαίδων ῥήξ), and also refers

51 Makk (1989), pp. 123–124; Stephenson (2000), pp. 303–304. For Choniates's portrayal of Emperor Henry VI, see the second section of Ch. 12.

52 See Brand (1968), pp. 88–89, 96, who also thinks that Bela showed "good will" to Isaakios, notably in his attempts to mediate between him and Barbarossa during the Third Crusade. See also *ibid.*, p. 183; Makk (1989), p. 122.

53 According to Grumel and Darrouzès (1989), no. 1166, p. 580, the marriage was probably rejected by the synod in Constantinople because it would have given Bela too dangerous a claim to the imperial throne or a pretext to invade Romania again. See also Brand (1968), pp. 79–80; Stephenson (2000), pp. 284–285. That the match was refused "purely out of canonic considerations," as claimed by Makk (1989), p. 120, seems doubtful because there were ways to free Theodora from her vows. Given that Bela's ties of kinship with Manouel I's family had given him a pretext to invade Romania, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Byzantine government was reluctant to agree to the marriage. See also ΝΙΚΕΤΑΣ ΧΟΝΙΑΤΕΣ, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 431, n. 73 (p. 741).

54 See the second section of Ch. 4.

55 See ΝΙΚΕΤΑΣ ΧΟΝΙΑΤΕΣ, *Hist.*, p. 125(42–45): "I have omitted those [of Manouel's campaigns against the Turks] which entailed nothing worth telling, they were [would have been] likely to cause surfeit in the audience [of the history], for they often make the history turn around the same events and they have nothing varied [to contribute] to the narrative" (παρήκα δὲ τούτων ὅσαι σὺν τῷ μὴ ἀξιαφήγητόν τι κεκτῆσθαι καὶ κόρον τοῖς φιληκόοις ἐμποιοῦσιν ἤμελλον, οἷα τὰ πολλὰ εἰς ταῦτά τὴν ἱστορίαν ἐπαναστρέφουσαι καὶ μηδὲν τι παρεξήλλαχός εἰς τὴν διήγησιν ἔχουσαι).

56 Van Dieten (1971), pp. 83–86; Simpson (2013), p. 56.

to two meetings with the emperor. The king is described as an inferior barbarian ruler who trembles before the emperor's might and hopes that his kinship will be to his advantage.<sup>57</sup> Bela is also addressed as an inferior ruler in the wedding oration of 1185/86, with the connection to the imperial dynasty through his daughter taken as acceptance of his submission to the empire.<sup>58</sup> This demonstrates that the imperial ideological stance regarding Hungary continued and that Bela, even if described as a barbarian ruler, was still regarded as a member of the Byzantine hierarchy based on his connections with the empire, despite a decline in imperial power.

Such a marriage alliance was only conceivable with a Christian, not with a Muslim or pagan ruler. As usual in diplomatic exchanges with Christian rulers,<sup>59</sup> the Byzantine emperor offered gifts pertaining to their shared Christian faith.<sup>60</sup>

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57 In NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 4, pp. 32(8)–33(31), Bela is described as basically constrained to approach Isaakios like a subject because he knows that he could otherwise be made to submit by force; therefore, he clings to his kinship with the emperor in the desperate hope of being regarded favorably. When he meets him at the Istros (Danube), he observes the emperor's awe-inspiring, well-proportioned body and the virtue that it symbolizes. Isaakios is said to resemble King David, and the barbarian ruler's amazement at the emperor's appearance turns into fear, making him even more eager to submit to imperial power. His kingdom is referred to as a "satrapy," denoting the dominion of a Persian provincial governor in antiquity. In this instance, it can be interpreted as "subordinate kingdom" or "subordinate rule." The oration describes Bela and his subjects as so impressed that they receive Isaakios like their ruler at the meeting. The emperor therefore wins a bloodless victory over the Gepids (i.e., the Hungarians), which anticipates their final subjugation. The first meeting (p. 32[5–13]) might have taken place in Philippoupolis, after which Isaakios was received by his father-in-law in Sirmion (p. 33[10–20]). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 434(25–35); Van Dieten (1971), p. 82; Makk (1989), p. 123.

58 See Ch. 3, p. 146.

59 See esp. the first section of Ch. 15 for the case of Henry IV.

60 Prinzing (2005), pp. 155–156. In a more recent study, Prinzing (2012) has shown that Archbishop Job of Esztergom most likely received the famous Esztergom reliquary, probably made in 1190, together with one of the two (known) letters sent by the emperor. The correspondence with the archbishop, probably combined with the presentation of the reliquary by Byzantine envoys, seems to have been part of the preparation for the meetings. For Isaakios's letter to the archbishop of Esztergom, mainly concerned with Christian dogma, see Dölger and Wirth (1995), nos. 1601a–b, p. 303; Gastgeber (2011b). It should be noted that document no. 1601a (i.e., Isaakios's first letter to the archbishop) has not survived, contrary to Wirth's claim: see Prinzing (2012), p. 251, n. 21.

## 2 The Successful and Not So Successful Management of Hungarian Royals

During the long twelfth century, Byzantine emperors were interested in playing Hungarian pretenders to the throne and magnates off against each other, to the advantage of Byzantium in the Balkans. Other princes besides Alexios-Bela were persuaded by Ioannes II and Manouel to act according to imperial interests. Kinnamos gives an account of Hungarian royal succession customs<sup>61</sup> to explain Almos's escape to Romania (in ca. 1125), which, as can be inferred from his and Choniates's histories, set a precedent.<sup>62</sup>

Kinnamos inaccurately states that both Almos and Stephen (II) were sons of King Ladislaus (I). Stephen, son of King Coloman, was Almos's nephew and neither descended from Ladislaus. However, to conclude that Kinnamos was "confused," as Brand states, seems inapt. Based on parallel cases in Kinnamos's work and those of other historiographers, a more plausible hypothesis is that the matter was not important for what he intended to convey.<sup>63</sup> It appears to be more than a coincidence, therefore, that Choniates also refers to Almos as Stephen's brother.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, in the case of King Geza II's quarrel with his brothers Stephen (IV) and Ladislaus (II), Kinnamos appears content to state that he does not know why they quarreled, implying that he did not consider it particularly important.<sup>65</sup>

Kinnamos also deals with another pretender who was welcomed in Byzantium under Ioannes II, namely a certain Boris (Βορίσσης), and evidence suggests he is another example of successful integration of members of non-Byzantine upper social strata into the aristocracy and imperial family.<sup>66</sup>

61 On the brother of the king having a superior claim to succeed over that of the king's son, disputed at this time for political reasons, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 289, n. 5 (pp. 601–602).

62 See Makk (1989), p. 24: "Thus Álmos was the first pretender in Hungarian history who left for exile in Byzantium, setting an example for nearly all the Hungarian pretenders in the 12th century." Almos may have styled himself Konstantinos in Romania, as suggested by later Hungarian evidence: see Thoma (1985), p. 85.

63 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 9(9)–10(18); IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 17, n. 9 (p. 235); Makk (1989), pp. 22–24; Zorzi (2012), pp. 40–41. The possibility remains that Kinnamos was unsure, but intended to revise his work later, correcting such imprecisions. However, because they are a frequent phenomenon not limited to his history, the stated explanation clearly appears to be the more plausible.

64 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 17(39–47). For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

65 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 203(4–5).

66 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 117(17)–118(8), 216(3–17); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 93(72–79), 140(68–75); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 215,

Non-Greek sources reveal that he claimed to be a son of King Coloman, but as his mother had been accused of adultery he was not recognized as legitimate. He made three major efforts to win the crown, after which he settled permanently in Romania. Ioannes did not support him in these attempts because his political concerns lay elsewhere; the same holds true for Manouel. After his escape to Romania in ca. 1131, Boris married a relative of the emperor, Eirene Botaneiataina Doukaina Komnene, styling himself Kalamanos. In the early 1150s he commanded troops against Geza II. It can be inferred from a monastic charter that the title of *πανυπερσέβαστος* was bestowed upon him and that he was recognized, as he styled himself, as king (*κράλης*) of Hungary. Konstantinos Kalamons, *doux* of Cilicia under Manouel, appears to have been his son. Boris enjoyed some successes against Hungarian troops, as Kinnamos narrates, but Choniates reveals that he was less fortunate against the “Scythians” (Cumans), who fought as allies of the Hungarian king, against whom the pretender fell in battle in ca. 1155. Two surviving poems suggest that the *σεβαστός* Konstantinos Kalamanos made efforts to demonstrate his loyalty to the emperor, citing his kinship and successes against Hungary, to the detriment of his royal Hungarian lineage.<sup>67</sup>

The story of another pretender to the Hungarian throne, Stephen IV, is covered more extensively but no less generically than that of Almos or Boris. Kinnamos’s narrative in particular devotes some attention to Stephen, primarily because he represented Manouel’s claim to establish his hegemony in one of Romania’s important neighboring realms and/or to expand Byzantine rule to Sirmion and Dalmatia. Choniates explains the genealogical situation to provide the background of the struggle for the throne, recounting that Geza II had two brothers, Stephen (IV) and Ladislaus, and two sons, Stephen (III)

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n. 95 (p. 582); Barzos (1984), vol. 2, no. 99, pp. 33–43; Makk (1989), esp. pp. 31–41, 56, 60–61 (and n. 198); Magdalino (1993b), p. 55; Zorzi (2012), pp. 152, 214. For a seal of an anonymous Kalamanos, dated to the second half of the 1100s, see Jeffreys et al. (2017), Anonymous 20173 (the possession of the Kalamanoi is also documented: see Grünbart (2015), pp. 78–79, 93, 118–119. Choniates might have been unfamiliar with “a certain Kalamanos” (i.e., Boris) and his family lineage; after all, Boris lived before the historian’s time. Presumably out of ignorance, as suspected by Zorzi, but also because of disinterest, Choniates calls the lineage of Konstantinos Kalamanos insignificant. However, this lack of appreciation, which contrasts with the frequent mention of the noble birth of Westerners, is part of his mockery of Konstantinos, who, sent by the emperor to Antioch, wooed the empress’s sister Philippa in vain and could not compete with the impressive Andronikos Komnenos. For the title *κράλης*, see above.

67 MARC. COD. 524, nos. 115, 330; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 473, 475; Grünbart (2015), p. 135.

and Bela (111). As both historians reveal, Stephen came to Romania (in 1158)<sup>68</sup> because King Geza intended to kill him, omitting that Stephen had previously attempted to murder Geza and had sought refuge at the court of Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>69</sup> Choniates relates that Manouel welcomed Stephen at his court and even married him to his niece Maria. Ladislaus followed him in ca. 1160. Choniates claims it was not because of his brother Geza or fear for his life but because “he was beguiled by the report about his brother Stephanos.” While Ladislaus may have hoped to gain advantages from Manouel, the main cause was indeed the prince’s quarrel with his brother. Choniates was either misinformed, did not bother to investigate, or simply chose to stress one aspect over the other. Writing about a person who had died when the historian was still a child and had not yet moved to Constantinople, he may well have borrowed his assessment from imperial panegyric, which would have stressed the awe and attraction of imperial splendor. The statement might also have been intended to be derisive, because Choniates stresses how Stephen’s close connections with Romania worked to his disadvantage.<sup>70</sup>

The following, while strongly reflecting introspective tendencies, also speaks to the political importance of and relative proximity with Hungary. Ladislaus “was not received by the emperor in a fashion unworthy of his [noble] lineage.” Unlike Stephen, though, he was concerned about losing status at home by too close a connection with the imperial dynasty—which would have been a real prospect, according to Choniates—and thus adopted a different strategy. The backing of a Byzantine emperor threatened to drastically reduce the support a pretender could hope to receive from Hungarian lords, most of whom saw more advantages in independence from Romania.<sup>71</sup> The historian remarks on the fascination that the empire and, especially, the capital held for aristocrats from other realms, including the temptation of beautiful Byzantine women. He likens this fascination to the lotus in Homer’s *Odyssey* that caused anyone

68 The “Stephanos, son of Iatzas [Geza],” who, according to IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 132(20), fought alongside the Byzantines against Geza II in 1154, was obviously not Geza’s eldest son, who was a child then, nor was it Stephen (IV), as has often been assumed. It is plausible that he was Stephen (IV)’s cousin and namesake who resembled him according to Kinnamos, pp. 224(20)–225(12). See also Makk (1989), pp. 67–68.

69 Makk (1989), pp. 66–70; Zorzi (2012), p. 198.

70 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 126(51–59). See also Makk (1989), pp. 76–77. On irony, mockery, and humor in Byzantine literature, see Garland (1990); Haldon (2002); Ljubarskij (2003, 2004); Marciniak (2008); Braounou (2014); Alexiou and Cairns (2017).

71 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 126(48–64); see p. 126(59–60): “οὐδ’ [...] ἀναξίως τοῦ γένους τῷ βασιλεῖ προσεῖληπται.” See Makk (1989), pp. 81–82, 85; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 289, n. 3 (p. 601); Zorzi (2012), p. 198. See also below, pp. 197–198.

who ate it to lose all thought of their native land—a topos which alludes to an attitude of Byzantine cultural superiority.<sup>72</sup>

The story of a representative of a non-Byzantine dynasty refusing a match with the emperor's family suits Choniates's narrative of decline and *Kaiserkritik*. By contrast, characteristic of Kinnamos's strong encomiastic tendency, his history omits this aspect and merely remarks that Ladislaus "remained unwed."<sup>73</sup> The death of Geza II (in 1162)<sup>74</sup> then provided a welcome opportunity:

He [Manouel] repeatedly considered the thought in his mind that—should the satrapy over the Huns [Hungarians] pass on to the husband of his niece, Stephanos, who henceforward claimed the rule [over the Hungarians]—he himself would acquire fame in the first place, moreover the empire of the Romans would perhaps receive a share of the spoils as a result and most certainly the secure possession of Frangochorion and Zeugminon, he [therefore] directed his will to the execution of what he had planned.<sup>75</sup>

Choniates implies that if Stephen succeeded in Hungary, Manouel would regard him as his subordinate, as a vassal from a Western perspective, akin to a provincial governor of high rank in the eyes of the Byzantine government.<sup>76</sup> Manouel took decisive measures to support Stephen's claim. According to Choniates's account, Ladislaus's prudence in distancing himself from the Byzantine court paid off, for despite Manouel's attempts to win over the Hungarian magnates with gifts and promises, they were reluctant to accept imperial overlordship.

72 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 126(63–64); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 289, n. 4 (p. 601) with reference to the *Odyssey*, Book 9(87–97). See also Efthymiadis (2008), p. 24 and n. 13; and Chs. 2 and 3, pp. 134, 143–144, 153 and 169–170, for the topos of forgetting one's native land in Romania.

73 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 203(9–10): "ἄζυξ διετέλει."

74 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 126(65)–127(69).

75 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 127(69–75): "κατὰ νοῦν ἀναπολήσας, ὡς εἰ πρὸς τὸν ἐπ' ἀνεψιᾷ γαμβρὸν Στέφανον, ὡς δῆθεν εἰς ἀρχὴν δικαιούμενον, ἢ τῶν Οὐννων μεταβαίῃ σατράπευσις, σχοίῃ ἂν τὰ πρῶτα κλέος αὐτός, ἔπειτα ἢ βασιλεία Ῥωμαίων μέρος ἴσως ἐκεῖθεν δασμοῦ, ἐκ τοῦ ἀναντιρρήτου δ' οὖν ἀσφαλῆ τὴν τοῦ Φραγγοχωρίου καὶ τοῦ Ζευγμίνου κατάσχεσιν, συντείνει τὸ πρόθυμον πρὸς τὴν τῶν σκοποῦμένων ἐκπλήρωσιν." The term σατράπευσις ("satrapy"), which the historian employs, is an archaizing word and appears to have been invented in this specific form by Choniates himself. According to Trapp et al. (2011), sub σατράπευσις, it denotes a subordinate rule or lordship. Significantly, the description in Choniates's "Serbian oration" also applies this term to Bela III's kingdom and his relationship with Isaakios II: see section 1 of this chapter, p. 193, n. 57.

76 Makk (1989), p. 81.

This might have meant paying taxes to the *basileus* and performing military service for the empire, possibly in areas far from Hungary's borders.<sup>77</sup>

The statement that the emperor fought wars for Stephen should be placed in the context of Choniates's censure of Manouel's policy to increase the tax burden on his subjects and spend lavishly, which, according to the *Historia*, benefited those from abroad, especially Latins, and was to Romania's detriment.<sup>78</sup> Kinnamos, by contrast, places more emphasis on Manouel's success, noting that Stephen, while not becoming king, was named heir to the throne, or οὐρούμ, a title that Kinnamos explains designated the Hungarian king's heir apparent. Other sources reveal that this position was accompanied by the granting to Stephen of an extensive duchy that now came into the Byzantine sphere of influence. Even if Kinnamos's testimony is brief, it accords with other evidence that Ladislaus's accession was fortunate for Romania, not just because Stephen was compensated generously, but also because Ladislaus, while having kept his distance from the Byzantines, appears to have been committed to respecting his brother's position and an extension of Byzantine influence.<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps due to his concern to glorify Manouel, Kinnamos is unwilling to admit that Stephen's Byzantine connections were a liability in winning the support of Hungarian magnates. He states that Stephen "seemed grievous to his subjects and was excessively oppressive" and that the Hungarians accused him of many things and of having utterly ruined the realm.<sup>80</sup> Despite Byzantine support, Stephen did not manage to assert himself as king after Ladislaus's early demise—Kinnamos discreetly limits himself to the general statement that the emperor realized it was impossible for Stephen to rule in Hungary, putting the blame on Stephen's lack of skill as a ruler. Accordingly, Manouel attempted to strengthen his claim to and hold over Sirmion and Dalmatia by means of the betrothal between his daughter Maria and Alexios-Bela, which Stephen III paid for with the relinquishment of Bela's patrimony to Romania. Manouel could now rely on both Stephen IV and Bela to strengthen Byzantine interests in these lands, but, until the decisive Byzantine victory of 1167, he nevertheless had to intervene militarily repeatedly to ensure they remained

77 Makk (1989), pp. 81–82.

78 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 127(76)–128(4). However, Choniates's criticism appears to have been motivated at least in part by his socio-political outlook: see above, pp. 187–188, and Ch. 8.

79 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 203(10–21). See Stephenson (2000), p. 249.

80 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 211(14)–212(5); see p. 211(16): "βαρὺς ἐδόκει τοῖς ἀρχομένοις καὶ λίαν ἐπαχθῆς ἦν."



under his influence. Kinnamos says that, in 1163 at least, Manouel no longer supported Stephen in his efforts to regain the crown, but still acted as his protector, since his aim, as revealed in a letter from Manouel to Stephen, was to retain lands.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, Manouel formally promised never to support Stephen the Elder in a bid for the throne and, having acquired Bela's lands, attempted to persuade him to retreat from Hungary. Stephen's stubborn refusal to follow what is described as Manouel's reasonable arguments is harshly criticized: "Thus a spirit once gripped by lust alters and constrains every argument in its direction." Kinnamos resists denigrating Stephen as a barbarian, as he was Manouel's relative both through marriage to Maria Komnene and through Manouel's mother Eirene-Piroska, but clearly implies that Stephen's stubbornness is befitting of a barbarian. Despite the defection of numerous troops to his nephew's side, Stephen the Elder persisted in his obstinate refusal to retreat. In the end, he had to escape to Sirmion, as advised by the Byzantines.<sup>82</sup> However, when Stephen the Younger again occupied Sirmion in 1165 and laid siege to Zeugminon, Kinnamos recounts that the *basileus* decided to support his protégé's claim one last time, contrary to his previous intentions.<sup>83</sup>

Choniates's otherwise briefer account is more detailed on the unfortunate pretender's death, around which he constructs an illustrative tale that is introspective in character. Besieged in Zeugminon by his nephew Stephen III's troops, Stephen the Elder was poisoned, according to Choniates, by a servant named Thomas. Kinnamos is vague and merely says that some Hungarians in Stephen's entourage were bribed by the besiegers to "mingle something fatal for the man," whereupon Zeugminon was taken.<sup>84</sup> The harsh criticism of Thomas's deed and the remark that men are unable to control their fate, since this lies in God's hands, would seem to pertain to the sins and fate of the Byzantines as well. The story of Stephen's end is framed in such a way as to reinforce this message.<sup>85</sup>

81 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 214(19)–215(11), 216(16)–217(19): criticism of Stephen IV acting secretly rather than cautiously in his attempt to reclaim the crown, 217(19)–218(5); letter. See also above, pp. 181–183.

82 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 224(12)–226(23); p. 225(19)–21: "οὕτω ψυχὴ καθάπαξ ἐπιθυμίας ἀλοῦσα πάντα λόγον εἰς αὐτὰς μεταφέρει καὶ βιάζεται."

83 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 231(6)–232(2).

84 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 239(14)–240(3); p. 239(17): "δηλητήριον τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ κερᾶσαι."

85 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 128(4–27). See also Efthymiadis (2008); Zorzi (2012), p. 201; Simpson (2013), p. 146.

## The Special Case of the “Barbarian Ax-Bearers”

The portrayal of Varangians is a good illustration of the generic treatment of non-Byzantine cultures.<sup>1</sup> The term “Varangians” itself comes from Old Norse and originally denoted “persons enlisted by oath in some kind of commercial or military organization” rather than an ethnicity.<sup>2</sup> While they did hail from the largely Christianized West, and developments such as the crusades increased contacts with Scandinavian peoples and polities, they played a distinct role in Romania and formed ties with the empire earlier than other Westerners. The portrayal of this imperial guard illustrates relevant Byzantine literary representations of and attitudes towards other groups from the West. The guard is referred to frequently in the literature of the Komnenian period, especially in historiographical works. Extensive remarks about them, however, are the exception. In most cases, their presence is merely recorded.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, characteristics constituting their unique role are regularly brought up, pointing to a special relationship between Byzantines in the capital and the guard.<sup>4</sup>

The Greek sources identify them as barbarians hailing “from the barbaric land next to the ocean,”<sup>5</sup> “from the island of Thoule.”<sup>6</sup> In accordance with the works of Strabo, Dionysios Periegetes, and Claudius Ptolemy, Thoule is described in Byzantine literature of the twelfth century as a remote, northern,

1 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

2 Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 4–7; Schramm (1983); Lind (2016), pp. 409–410. On its Byzantine use as a convenient general term, see Shepard (1973), pp. 62–63. According to Scheel (2015), pp. 187–188, Varangians in twelfth-century Byzantium were not only of Anglo-Saxon origin, but also hailed from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Atlantic islands, and the Hebrides. However, they were represented as one group.

3 See also Ciggaar (1996), p. 126.

4 On the Varangian guard and the relationship between Byzantium and Scandinavia in general, see Androshchuk (2013); Scheel (2015); Androshchuk, Shepard, and White (2016). Older studies such as Davidson (1976) and Blöndal and Benedikz (1978) should only be used alongside the more recent investigations that criticize and revise numerous aspects and hypotheses. For the special role of the Varangians and their appreciation in Byzantium specifically, see Scheel (2015), pp. 215–216.

5 NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* 1.20, pp. 123(12)–125(7); see p. 123(13–14): “τοῦτο δὲ τὸ γένος ὤρμητο ἐκ τῆς βαρβαρίου χώρας τῆς πλησίον ὠκεανού.”

6 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 11.11.7, p. 84(80–84); see p. 84(83–84): “ἀπὸ τῆς Θούλης νήσου.” See also *ibid.*, 11.9.4, p. 79(27–30), and VI.11.3, p. 193(13), where Anna states that the Roman Empire of old extended to “the legendary Thoule” (ἡ περιθρύλλητος Θούλη) in the north.

and wintry island. It came to designate a remote land in general.<sup>7</sup> Byzantine literary works are often silent or remain vague about the Varangians. They omit entirely the visits of Eric I of Denmark (1095–1103) and Sigurd of Norway (1103–30) to Constantinople, visits that allowed Alexios to recruit new imperial guards and mercenaries. Eric was received and depicted similarly to Stephen Nemanja in 1172—an indication of the creation of a literal image of rulers from abroad.<sup>8</sup> Kinnamos and Choniates designate the Varangians as “Britannic” and “English” (Ἰγγλινοί), the latter appearing in connection with the crusade of King Richard I (1189–99).<sup>9</sup> This is an indication that the Varangians were first recruited from Scandinavia and Kievan Rus’, and, after the Norman conquest of 1066, also from England.<sup>10</sup>

The non-classical term “Varangians” is found in several literary works of the period, such as Zonaras’s history, Glykas’s works, or the Skylitzes continuation. Some authors, especially those with claims to linguistic purity, avoid it altogether, notably Choniates and Kinnamos, whereas Anna uses it only to declare her awareness of the classical designation of the imperial guards.<sup>11</sup> They are frequently alluded to as “ax-bearing barbarians.”<sup>12</sup>

7 See, e.g., MICHAEL ITALIKOS, Works, no. 23, p. 174(14–16) and n. 5. In this letter, Italikos comments that not only would he be happy to travel to Rome as an envoy, but that he would even go “beyond Thoule” (τὰ ἐπέκεινα Θούλης), i.e., very far indeed, if the emperor wished it so, thus underlining his eagerness to serve the ruler. NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 484(71–72), also stresses how far the Byzantines lived from Thoule, the outermost parts of the island being as remote as a land possibly could be from Romania. Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 144, argue “that in Byzantium Thule was a term of convenience to cover any northern island with suitable vagueness.” See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 73, n. 177 (p. 472); Scheel (2015), pp. 190–194.

8 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Orations, ed. Wirth, no. 13, pp. 217(86)–218(24), trans. Stone, pp. 108–110; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 242–243. For the account of Eric I’s reception in the *Gesta Danorum*, see Scheel (2015), pp. 913–915.

9 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 8(14–17); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 417(65–68).

10 Shepard (1973, 2016); Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 141–147; Ciggaar (1996), pp. 140–141. They notably refer to a charter issued by Nikephoros III in January 1080—Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1048a, p. 81; Scheel (2015), p. 825—which, in addition to representatives of other peoples, refers to “Ros,” “Varangians,” and “English” (Ῥῶς, Βάραγγοί, Ἰγγλινοί) in the Byzantine army.

11 See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. II.9.4, p. 79(27–30): “By these [the aforementioned Varangians from Thoule] I mean the ax-bearing barbarians” (τούτους δὴ λέγω τοὺς πελεκοφόρους βαρβάρους).

12 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 65, n. 185 (pp. 586–589). Examples of a classical designation include NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIS, Hist., pp. 217(23)–219(6), 247(16–17), 283(8); ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. II.9.4, p. 79(27–30), IV.5.3, p. 130(20), IV.6.6, p. 134(33–46), VII.3.6, p. 211(55), XII.6.3, 374(2–6), XIV.3.8, p. 437(19)–438(23); IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 8(14–17), 97(19), 187(8–9); NIKOLAOS MESARITES, Palace Revolt,

Contemporary literary sources describe their value for and dedication to the imperial cause and their military role,<sup>13</sup> but also state that they were mercenaries who expected reward for their service. Varangians were not always loyal to the reigning emperor and could be persuaded in exceptional circumstances to change sides. Choniates specifically mentions instances such as the revolt against Andronikos in 1185, the near collapse of imperial government in January 1204, and the final onslaught of the crusaders in April 1204.<sup>14</sup> Mesarites claims that the Varangians were not the bravest troops fighting for the emperor, stating that during a revolt in the summer of 1200,<sup>15</sup> they hesitated to confront the forces of the usurper Ioannes Axouchos Komnenos, and that the manly courage of a eunuch would have surpassed theirs.<sup>16</sup> Whatever Mesarites's

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pp. 24(9), 42(15, 27), 47(31), 48(20); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 172(73–74), 248(79)–249(84), 264(55–65), 266(13–15), 343(31–37), 407(75–80), 417(65–68), 525(11–13), 527(62–64), 545(34–39), 550(26–28), 563(70–84), 572(65–78). For the employment of the term “Varangians” (Βάραγγοί), see IOANNES SKYLITZES, *Hist.* (cont.), pp. 166(5), 181(9–19); GEORGIOS KEDRENOS, *Hist.*, vol. 2, pp. 508(20), 509(2), 602(79), 606(19), 613(12); IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, pp. 722(3–6), 763(1)–764(1); MICHAEL GLYKAS, *Prison Poem*, p. 8(170); MICHAEL GLYKAS, *Hist.*, pp. 586(20), 587(2, 4). It should be noted that the Varangians could also be referred to as “chosen household guards,” “the hardy henchmen of the emperor,” or by means of other, similarly vague expressions: see, e.g., Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 127–128; and ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VII.7.3, p. 221(50–56), VII.10.4, p. 231(94–96). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 88(49)–89(52), 248(79)–249(81), for the designation Γερμανοί. According to Scheel (2015), pp. 226, 860–861, the first passage, pertaining to the garrison of Kerkyra in 1149, allows the identification of at least part of the said Γερμανοί as Varangians when compared to the second: ax-bearing Γερμανοί (Varangians) also arrested the regent and *prōtosebastos* Alexios Komnenos in 1182.

13 See below.

14 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 343(31–37, no intervention in Andronikos's favor in 1185), 563(70–84, won over to the conspiracy of Alexios Doukas against Alexios IV in January 1204), 570(38 app., referred to as “English,” handing over the palace of Blachernai to the crusaders without resisting in April 1204), 572(65–78, demanding a higher salary at first for continuing to defend the city and then fleeing when confronted with the Latin onslaught in April 1204).

15 On this event, see Angold (2015), with further references.

16 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, pp. 42(29)–43(6): “He [Alexios Palaiologos] found some [of the aforementioned “ax-bearers”] straying due to the confusion which had ensued, others hiding in holes—for the one to gather them was not there—and by means of his sweet-sounding [words] rekindled [courage in] all and assembled them like a mother hen her own chickens [...] Those from among the [non-Byzantine] peoples, however, were cowardly, flinching from advancing [against the rebels] and were cast down, the night [serving] them as an excuse for their pusillanimity: [when] our division was [caught up] in faintheartedness, the most well-disposed of eunuchs [...], the most stout of heart, Oinaïotes by surname, Georgios by name, who [as a eunuch] acted more manly than the barbarians, again also encouraged our division to advance, shouting keenly and raising the battle-cry” (ὦν τοὺς μὲν περιπλάζομένους εὐρῶν διὰ τὴν ἐπισυμβάσαν

motive for making this statement, it confirms that the Varangians were not always seen as “legitimist” fighters for the imperial cause, that they could lose courage or determination, and that they did not always live up to their reputation as fearless warriors.<sup>17</sup> They remained mercenaries intent on their own advantage. Konstantinos Laskaris’s short address to the Varangians, which figures in Choniates’s history,<sup>18</sup> highlights the special role of the Varangians but, like Choniates’s and Western accounts of the fall of Byzantium, argues that they would change sides when they deemed it appropriate.<sup>19</sup> Anna’s assurance that they were unshakably loyal reflects more a certain reputation of the Varangians than their actual behavior. This unshakeable loyalty has been identified as a myth by Scheel.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, they maintained a reputation for effective service and were credited with other virtues. In the late 1070s—shortly before the accession of Alexios I—Kekaumenos fondly remembered the valiant service of a prominent individual, Harald Hardrada (Ἀράλτης), the future king of Norway (1046–66), whom he praises for his high birth (*eugeneia*) and noble character (γενναιότης). He served emperors from Michael IV to Konstantinos IX for nearly ten years (1034–43), and “as a king, too, he maintained his loyalty to and love for the Romans.”<sup>21</sup> According to Scheel, however, he did not serve in the imperial Varangian guard, which only emerged under Alexios I (1081–1118).<sup>22</sup> In the autumn of 1081, as narrated by the *Alexiad*, Varangians fought bravely and were decimated in the battle for Dyrrachion against Robert Guiscard. Yet Anna

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τῷ τότε σύγχυσιν, τοὺς δὲ ταῖς ἰδίαις τρώγλαις ἐγκαταδύντας—οὐ γὰρ ἦν ὁ ἐπισυνάγων αὐτούς—διὰ τῆς ἡδυεπειίας ἀνεξωπύρησεν ἅπαντας καὶ ὡς μήτηρ νοσσία ἐπισυνήγαγεν ἑαυτῆς [...] ἐδειλάνδρουν οἱ ἐξ ἔθνῶν, ἀπεδειλίωσιν τὴν πρόοδον, συνεστέλλοντο, ἢ νύξ τῆς συστολῆς αὐτοῖς πρόφασις· τὸ ἡμέτερον φύλον ἐν ἀθυμίᾳ, ὁ τῶν εὐνούχων εὐνούστατος [...], εὐψυχότατος, Οἰναιώτης τοῦ πικίλην Γεώργιος τοῦ νομα, ὃς καὶ ὑπὲρ τοὺς βαρβάρους ἠνδρίσατο καὶ τὸ ἡμέτερον φύλον τὴν πρόοδον κόπτειν ἀνέρωσεν, ἀνακεκραγῶς ὄξυ καὶ ἀλαλάζων τὸ ἐνούσιον).

17 Scheel (2015), pp. 242–246. According to Scheel, contemporary encomia by Euthymios Tornikes and Nikephoros Chrysoberges also suggest that the Varangians were involved in the killing of the head of the revolt, Ioannes Komnenos Axouchos.

18 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 572(71–72): “for [if the Byzantines should lose the city] they [the Varangians] would no longer be paid in abundance, nor would they receive the far-famed gifts of honor pertaining to guarding emperors” (οὐ γὰρ μισθοφορήσουσιν ἔτι ἀδρῶς, οὐδὲ γέρα περιώνυμα τῆς βασιλείων φυλακῆς ἀπολήψονται).

19 Scheel (2015), pp. 248–256.

20 Shepard (1973), pp. 66–69; Scheel (2015), esp. pp. 164ff., 259–271.

21 KEKAUMENOS, *Monitory Oration*, p. 97(1–27); see p. 97(26–27): “καὶ βασιλευῶν ἐφύλαξε πίστιν καὶ ἀγάπην πρὸς Ῥωμαίους”; Blöndal and Benediktz (1978), esp. ch. IV; Scheel (2015), pp. 126–138, 819–820. On the date of the composition of Kekaumenos’s address to the emperor, see also Shepard (1973), p. 64.

22 Scheel (2015), pp. 100ff., 259–271.

criticizes them and their commander Nampites<sup>23</sup> for their overbold “temper” (θυμός) and “passion” (θερμότης), which as barbarians they shared with the “Kelts” (Normans) and which, in combination with the regiment’s “inexperience” (ἀπειρία), led to their defeat. Nevertheless, Anna seems to appreciate the Varangians’ bravery, even if it is said to have amounted to excessive foolhardiness in this case. It should not be assumed that she or her audience generally regarded the Varangians in this way. Rather, Anna, writing in a classical fashion, often seems to embrace occasions to ascribe attributes of barbarians to non-Byzantines. Moreover, her criticism of the behavior of the Varangian troops fighting at Dyrrachion pertains to their youth.<sup>24</sup>

Numerous other indications reference the effective service of Englishmen and Scandinavians and the emperor’s reliance on them. Bryennios, writing during the reign of Ioannes II, calls them “faithful to the emperors of the Romans from of old.”<sup>25</sup> Kinnamos refers to them as “a Britannic people, serving the emperors of the Romans from of old”<sup>26</sup> and states that it was customary for them to accompany the emperor during triumphal processions such as that in Antioch (in 1159),<sup>27</sup> a considerable indicator of prestige as well as a bond of trust between the Varangians and their imperial master. In 1171, “ax-bearing men” were employed against the Venetians at sea.<sup>28</sup> Emperor Andronikos (1183–85) chose them as his exclusive guard, and their absence from the capital emerges as a factor in his downfall.<sup>29</sup> Under other circumstances, the Varangians acted as enforcers of political order. Evidence suggests that they

23 Skoulatos (1980), no. 141, pp. 216–217. He was also named one of the emperor’s personal guards in 1087: ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VII.3.6, p. 211(50–56); Scheel (2015), p. 843.

24 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.6.6, p. 134(33–46).

25 NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* I.20, p. 123(14): “πιστὸν δὲ βασιλεῦσι Ῥωμαίων ἀρχήθεν.” The lack of evidence from the pre-Kommenian period that would support this claim has already been addressed.

26 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 8(14–17; see p. 8(15–16): “ἔθνος [...] Βρεταννικὸν βασιλεῦσι Ῥωμαίων δουλεῦον ἀνέκαθεν.” Kinnamos’s narrative also appears to give them credit for destroying a laager erected by the Pechenegs during a battle in 1122, for it is recounted that the “Romans” had previously declined to assault this laager under Emperor Ioannes II’s personal command. Whether the reason for their refusal was a concern for the safety of the ruler’s person, fear for their own lives, or the consideration that the Varangians had better equipment for destroying the cart fortress—notably their axes, with which they are said to have cut apart the carts—is unclear. At any rate, the passage appears to signify that the Varangian guard was very useful and brave in this battle. See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 15(94)–16(3), where he suggests the same, and Scheel (2015), pp. 216–223.

27 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 187(8–9). See Scheel (2015), pp. 226–227.

28 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 172(73–74). See Scheel (2015), pp. 228, 860–861.

29 Scheel (2015), pp. 236–240.

were entrusted with delicate and controversial tasks, such as accompanying the patriarch Dositheos to be reinstated against considerable opposition in 1191.<sup>30</sup> In 1200, according to Choniates, the guard was instrumental in putting down the revolts of Ioannes Lagos and Ioannes Axouchous Komnenos in the capital.<sup>31</sup> A commendatory assessment of the “ax-bearers” therefore predominates in literary works of the long twelfth century.

The imperial government made efforts to ensure that the guards retained (markers of) a distinct identity—thus they were both “insiders” and “outsiders.”<sup>32</sup> Their lack of integration into Byzantine society made the employment of Latins and other non-Byzantines oriented toward the *basileus* as benefactor attractive in efforts by twelfth-century emperors to strengthen their political position with respect to the aristocracy. The imperial government, recognizing the Varangians as an important asset, singled them out as a distinguished group to base their sense of identity and status on their relationship with the ruler.<sup>33</sup> They were not encouraged to learn Greek and may thus have had an official interpreter assigned to them.<sup>34</sup>

If the historians distinguish the “ax-bearers” from Byzantines, they also express familiarity. Portrayals such as those by Bryennios and Kinnamos indicate that the Varangians became a constant element in the Byzantine military as well as in society and politics. Nikolaos Mesarites addressed them as “brothers” (ἀδελφοί) when, during a revolt in 1200, they demanded to enter the Pharos Church—the main church of the Great Palace, where the author held the office of “sacristan” (σκευοφύλαξ)—in order to search for remaining rebels after their leader’s execution. An aggressive “Alamann”—a German, perhaps a mercenary—who intended to rob the church was stopped by the guards, to Mesarites’s joy and relief. According to his account, the ax-bearers “approached and greeted [me] kindly, for we were acquainted and friendly with each other” (προσηήσαν και ἡσπάζοντο ὡς ἄν και συνήθεις ὑπάρχοντες). The *skeuophylax* even allowed them to rest awhile in the church.<sup>35</sup> While some non-Byzantines and provincials are judged severely in this source, particularly the “Iberians” (Georgians or men from the Spanish peninsula) and “Italians,” who

30 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 407(75–80). See Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 109–110, 161; Angold (1997), p. 27, (2005), pp. 62, 64, 67–68; Scheel (2015), p. 240.

31 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 525(11–13), 527(62–64).

32 Smythe (2010), pp. 75–76.

33 Shepard (1973), pp. 90–91; Scheel (2015), p. 245.

34 Scheel (2015), pp. 286, 827; Shandrovskaia (2016), p. 308; also for a lead seal of a certain “Sveini, patrikios and interpreter of the English” (Σφένις διερμμενυτης τῶν Ἑνγλίνων) dated to the Komnenian period.

35 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, pp. 47(22)–48(28).

presumably were in the capital as mercenaries, there is every indication that others, notably the Varangians, were perceived as friends and allies by imperial and ecclesiastical officials such as Mesarites, even if they were still referred to as barbarians, inferior with respect to virtues such as *paideia*, *euglōttia*, and *asteiōtēs*.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, the passage confirms that the Varangians were held in high regard in Romania, despite shortcomings and the resentment caused by their execution of unpopular imperial commands.<sup>37</sup>

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36 For the virtues and identity markers upheld by Byzantine upper social strata, see the first section of Ch. 1.

37 Blöndal and Benediktz (1978), pp. 140–141, 189–190; Scheel (2015), pp. 245–248. See also Ch. 8, pp. 240–241, for Mesarites's assessment of non-Byzantine residents and provincials in the capital.



## Other Illustrative Cases

Greek and non-Greek sources of the long twelfth century are full of references to mercenaries in Romania other than the Varangians, as well as Westerners who resided in Byzantium and entered the emperor's service. A major part of the Byzantine army consisted of non-Byzantines, often Latins, and mercenaries, while the navy relied on Italian ships and crews.<sup>1</sup> These references are mostly brief or allusive, but as a whole they indicate that the presence of Westerners in the Byzantine army and navy, as well as in the aristocracy, imperial family, and administration, was varying but commonplace.

### 1 In the Imperial Army

Long before the Komnenian period, and particularly from the tenth century, mercenaries from diverse lands could be encountered in the Byzantine army.<sup>2</sup> The Byzantine military under the Komnenoi included many soldiers from abroad, notably Westerners,<sup>3</sup> as reflected in Greek historiography. Non-Byzantine soldiers and mercenaries served in mixed contingents, not divided according to ethnic origin, which avoided desertion to enemies of the same origin. This approach worked well, and, as Magdalino notes, “no record of serious mutiny or treachery” can be found between 1081 and 1185.<sup>4</sup>

#### 1.1 *The Importance of Mercenaries*

References to Latins in Alexios I's service and that of his predecessors are frequent in the *Alexiad*. A prominent example is the treaty of Deabolis (1108), which Anna Komnene quotes. Normans who defected to Alexios during the reigns of Robert Guiscard and Bohemond stand out. Quite a few would do so

1 Jeffreys (1984); Cheynet (2006), pp. 161–163. For the navy, see Lilie (1984a), esp. pp. 613–643; Pryor and Jeffreys (2006), pp. 76–122.

2 Cheynet (2006), p. 161.

3 For the increased Western presence in the Byzantine military in the decades preceding the accession of Alexios I in 1081, see Shepard (1993); Cheynet (2002).

4 Magdalino (1993b), p. 232, with reference to a passage in Choniates's history indicating that a division according to ethnic origin was unusual: NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 29(54)–30(90). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, vol. 1, trans. Pontani (2017), p. 63, n. 150 (pp. 517–518).

when tempted by lucrative offers. McQueen refers to this phenomenon as “the mercenary character of Norman society.” The Byzantines, recognizing the military aptitude of Norman mercenaries, used it against their adversaries. The lenient treatment of rebellious aristocrats in the Komnenian period extended to the Normans in Byzantine service who participated in conspiracies against imperial rule. For the most part, references to mercenaries of Western origin indicate that they were relied upon in Romania.<sup>5</sup>

The first reference by Anna is to Norman troops from southern Italy—Ἴταλοί, elsewhere referred to as Μανιακάτοι. They were employed in Alexios Komnenos’s army against the rebel Nikephoros Bryennios on behalf of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078–81).<sup>6</sup> The rebels were confident at one point during the conflict that they would be victorious because the Franks (Φράγγοι) in Alexios’s army had gone over to Bryennios. They had dismounted and pledged allegiance by displaying their right hands, which Anna identifies as an ancestral custom.<sup>7</sup> A “Kelt,” possibly a Norman, threatened to kill Alexios when he mistook him for an enemy in the heat of battle. The future emperor forgave him according to Anna, and she even applauds the man as “a noble soldier and full of the spirit of Ares.”<sup>8</sup>

It must have been attractive indeed for Normans to enter Byzantine service. Anna names quite a few men of importance who defected to the Byzantine side during the wars against Robert Guiscard and his son Bohemond. During his father’s absence from the campaign, Bohemond had to deal with three important barons who intended to change sides. Only one of them—a certain Πουντέσης—managed to join the emperor; the other two—Ῥενάλδος (Raynald) and Γελέλιμος (William)—were blinded. An imperial chrysobull of 1084 indicates that Πουντέσης conspired against Alexios, which shows that, despite having earned a reputation for loyalty, Norman mercenaries could not always be trusted.<sup>9</sup>

5 McQueen (1986).

6 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.5.2, p. 20(78–81). See also NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, Hist. IV.6, p. 269(8–12), who speaks of “Franks”; and IOANNES SKYLITZES, Hist. (cont.), p. 167(7–16). The designation Μανιακάτοι for this regiment mentioned by Skylitzes reappears in ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VII.9.2, p. 227(46–49), where she says that the arrival of the “Latins called Maniakatoi” in his camp encouraged her father during a campaign against the Pechenegs in 1090/91.

7 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.6.1, p. 24(87–96).

8 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.8.6, p. 32(36–46); see p. 32(38): “γενναῖος στρατιώτης καὶ Ἄρεως ὄλος ἔμπλεως.”

9 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.5.1, p. 153(74–91); see ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Agnello, p. 136, n. 65 (p. 345); Skoulatos (1980), no. 174, pp. 268–269 (the date is 1084, not 1087, as stated); Cheynet (1990), no. 120, p. 94; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1091a, p. 98, and

Anna tends to exaggerate the strength of hostile Norman troops, which makes her father's victory appear more glorious and influences her portrayal of Norman mercenaries.<sup>10</sup> She attests to the efficiency of mounted "Kelts" under Alexios's trusted commander Tatikios fighting with long lances against Turks led by Abu'l-Qasim. Confronted with the onslaught of the Normans, the Turks took flight.<sup>11</sup>

In accordance with the contemporary aristocratic ideal, a bellicose attitude is positively associated with Latins and Byzantines alike in literary sources, the *Alexiad* included. Similar to Anna's description of Alexios's reception of the Latin regiment of the *Μανιακάτοι* in his camp, Tatikios is said to have been impressed by the sight of Konstantinos Oumpertopoulos, a Norman who had risen to the governorship of Kyzikos, and his Latin troops for the war against the Pechenegs (1086). Anna emphasizes the pugnacity of the "bold" (*τολμηταί*) and "daring" (*θρασεῖς*) Normans, whom the prudent Tatikios had to restrain from attacking a Pecheneg army. This points to a downside of military prowess: the risk of taking an imprudent course of action. However, foolhardiness certainly had an ambivalent quality in the Komnenian period because the lines between praiseworthy daring and blameworthy foolhardiness, which was associated with barbarism, were blurred.<sup>12</sup> Efficient and brave as the Latin contingents may have been, there were instances in which they misjudged the situation. In Chios, the troops of the Turkish commander Tzachas repelled a charge of Latin lancers by firing arrows at their horses and attacking them with spears. This sight, Anna says, greatly frightened the Byzantine troops<sup>13</sup> because these Latin mercenaries were among the best soldiers in the army, even if they were foolhardy and undisciplined. Anna states that the Byzantine commander Konstantinos Dalassenos had ordered the Byzantine battle line to remain intact, implying that he had not authorized the Latin charge.

Konstantinos Oumpertopoulos is described earlier in the narrative as a "brave warrior" (*ἀρειμάνιος*) and a trusted follower of Alexios, who shared his plan with Oumpertopoulos to escape from his adversaries and take over the

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no. 115a, p. 103. IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 736(10–15), briefly mentions this conspiracy without giving any names.

10 See esp. Ch. 9, p. 246.

11 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* v.10.2, p. 189(65–68), v.10.4, p. 189(85)–190(90).

12 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vi.14.4, p. 201(66–72), vi.14.7, p. 202(10–13). According to NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 35(36–38), the young Manouel was punished by his father Ioannes II for having been "more daring than courageous" (*θρασύτερος μάλλον ἢ εὐτολμότερος*) in battle, but IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 21(12)–22(3), claims that, although Ioannes punished his son for his overboldness (*τόλμα*), he was also proud of his valor (*ἀρετή*).

13 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* vii.8.5–6, p. 224(36–51).

throne.<sup>14</sup> Oumpertopoulos, nonetheless, participated in a conspiracy against Alexios in May 1091, over which the emperor was lenient in his response. Rather than death, the customary penalty, the punishment was confiscation of Oumpertopoulos's property, a humiliating procession, and banishment.<sup>15</sup> However, he was reinstated, which points to his usefulness to the emperor. He again acted as a commander in Alexios's army against the Cumans (1095). Given the frequency of conspiracies during the first half of Alexios's reign, Anna does not make too much of every challenge to imperial authority.<sup>16</sup> Oumpertopoulos remained loyal to Alexios for the remainder of his life, realizing his best interest. Anna stresses her father's generosity toward his commanders, Oumpertopoulos included.<sup>17</sup> This generosity can be inferred from synodal acts of 1094 and a seal attributed to Oumpertopoulos showing that the *basileus* created him *sebastos* and πρωτονωβελλίσσιμος.<sup>18</sup>

An important addition to the imperial army were the 500 riders sent by the count of Flanders (Φλάντρας κόμης in the *Alexiad*), whose description points to common markers of identity and friendly relations with Alexios. Anna does not name him, but he can be identified as Robert I (1071–93), said to have met Alexios in Beroe on the return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Impressed by imperial ceremonial and in return for precious gifts and honors, the count rendered homage to him—Anna speaks of the “oath customary among Latins” (συνήθης τοῖς Λατίνοις ὄρκος)<sup>19</sup>—and promised to send the said troops upon his return to Flanders.<sup>20</sup> The *Alexiad* reports the arrival of the knights, bringing

14 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. II.4.7, p. 64(74–79). Anna also mentions him in Book IV.4.3, p. 127(24–27), where he is described as commander of imperial bodyguards and of the Franks in Alexios's army, serving with Niketas Panoukomites. She also indicates that Oumpertopoulos derived his name from his family. Book VIII.5.5, p. 247(64–65), mentions him again as commander of the “Kelts” during the battle of Lebounion.

15 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VIII.7.1, p. 252(94–96); IOANNES ZONARAS, Hist., p. 741(6–13). See Cheynet (1990), no. 124, p. 96.

16 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. X.2.6, p. 286(41–50). His participation in a synod in 1094 is also attested, which means that he had received a pardon by then: see Skoulatos (1980), p. 70.

17 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. II.4.8, pp. 64(79)–65(92). See Skoulatos (1980), no. 41, pp. 68–71.

18 Skoulatos (1980), p. 70; Jeffreys et al. (2017), Konstantinos 122: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Konstantinos/122/>.

19 The same expression is used elsewhere in the *Alexiad*, notably for the leaders of the First Crusade. On the significance of these oaths, see esp. Ch. 10.

20 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VII.6.1, p. 218(50–57). See Ganshof (1961); ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Agnello, p. 165, n. 94. Gastgeber (1998a) and Schreiner (1998) demonstrate that the alleged letter from Alexios to Robert of Flanders, dated to 1091, is not authentic.

with them 150 horses as a gift to the emperor. He employed the fresh troops for the defense against the Turks in Asia Minor.<sup>21</sup>

Anna also attests to the regular presence of Latin troops in imperial service in Alexios's later years,<sup>22</sup> even though she covers this period in less detail.<sup>23</sup>

Kinnamos's narrative also contains many references to the Latin presence in the Byzantine army. He mentions "an allied force of Ligurian knights, whom our people call Lombards" in the army led by Ioannes II against Hungary in 1128.<sup>24</sup> An episode in Choniates again points to an appreciation of the capabilities of Western knights. The *Historia's* account of the 1139 campaign of Ioannes II in Asia Minor narrates the defection of a Ioannes, the son of the *sebastokratōr* Isaakios Komnenos, to the Turks. Ioannes's defection was triggered by the emperor's request for him to give one of his many horses to "a distinguished knight from Italy" (ἰππότης ἐπίσημος ἐξ Ἰταλίας), for Ioannes II had seen that he was without a horse.<sup>25</sup>

In 1155, the army that fought for Manouel in Italy against William I of Sicily was mostly composed of mercenaries, a portion of whom were "Germans"—that is, men hailing from France in Kinnamos's terminology.<sup>26</sup> Choniates, for his part, speaks of "a strong troop of lance bearers from the Italian regions" (τῶν Ἰταλιωτίδων χωρῶν ἄδρὸν κοντοφορικόν), which Michael Palaiologos hired during the Italian war in addition to mercenaries recruited in Venice.<sup>27</sup>

The narrative of the Italian war also points to military prowess as a shared Byzantine-Latin identity marker. On that campaign there was a Latin from Antioch: "a certain Thomas, an Antiochene by birth" (Θωμάς δέ τις, γένος μὲν

21 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VII.7.4, pp. 221(57)–222(67). They appear once again in the narrative of the war against the Pechenegs (1091), Book VIII.3.5, p. 242(2–5).

22 See, for example, ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.9.2, p. 349(54–59), where she mentions that Alexios sent an army under Manouel Boutoumites to Cilicia to try to take Antioch from Bohemond. This army is said to have included a division of "brave" (γενναῖοι) Byzantines and "Kelts," 1,000 men in total. The campaign took place in 1103/04 according to Lilie (1993b), p. 262. A testimony to the effectiveness of "Keltic" lancers in the Byzantine army is ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.7.3.2–3, pp. 376(89)–377(18): they are said to have been instrumental in capturing the rebel Georgios Taronites. According to Cheynet (1990), no. 131, p. 101, these events occurred in 1105 or 1106.

23 She instead focuses on the troublesome first half of the reign, which allows her to stress the odds the emperor faced and overcame.

24 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 10(20–21): "συμμαχικὸν [...] ἔκ [...] Λιγούρων ἰππέων, οὓς Λωμπάρδους ἡμῖν ὀνομάζουσιν ἄνθρωποι."

25 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 35(39)–36(55). See also Barzos (1984), vol. 1, no. 84, pp. 480–485; Zorzi (2012), p. 70.

26 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 148(1–3).

27 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 91(13–15).

Ἄντιοχεύς) in Kinnamos's words, "who had long since become an adherent to the emperor" (βασιλεῖ δὲ αὐτόμολος ἐκ μακροῦ γεγεννημένος). He boldly engaged in jousting with a man renowned for his bravery, a certain Ἐγγέλυς, which is a Hellenized version of Angelo according to Brand.<sup>28</sup>

For the year 1160, Kinnamos attests to troops led by Raynald of Antioch, whom Manouel had defeated the previous year, in the imperial army. Raynald's contingent was part of auxiliary forces that Manouel requested from client rulers for a major campaign against the Turks. Baldwin III of Jerusalem also sent troops, which he had agreed to as part of an alliance with Manouel. The emperor additionally recruited "Ligurian" knights (from Lombardy or North Italy) and others from Rhodes, where, according to Kinnamos, Latins would stop on their way to Palestine.<sup>29</sup>

Latins were present at the siege of Zeugme (1165), where they vied with Andronikos Doukas for the glory of ascending a siege ladder first.<sup>30</sup> The episode again points to a compatibility of ideals of military prowess between Byzantine aristocrats and their Western counterparts. In the final campaign against Hungary under Manouel (1167), the Byzantine commander Andronikos Kontostephanos led an army that included "a few [Latin?] riders who fought with lances" (ἱππεῖς ὀλίγοι οἱ σὺν τοῖς δόρασι μάχονται), "Alamanni" (Germans), and "Italians from the mercenary force" (Ἴταλοι ἐκ τοῦ μισθοφορικοῦ).<sup>31</sup> The Western presence in the large army that suffered the defeat at Myriokephalon in 1176 was similarly diverse.<sup>32</sup>

The *kaisar* Ioannes (Renier of Montferrat) employed a "Latin bodyguard" (Λατινικὸν δορυφορικόν) during the civil war of 1181, which he likely brought with him when he came to Romania to marry the purple-born Maria.<sup>33</sup> During the civil war between Alexios Branas and Isaakios II (1187), the usurper had Norman foot soldiers in his ranks, who, according to Choniates, were among his most experienced troops. They had been captured during the war against Sicily and imprisoned, but Isaakios had released them and assigned them to Branas to reinforce the army. Mounted Normans decided a battle, if not the war, for the usurper.<sup>34</sup> Westerners, however, were well represented on

28 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 159(19)–160(15). See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 123.

29 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 199(3–19).

30 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 246(17)–247(8).

31 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 271(3–20).

32 Kinnamos mentions an auxiliary force sent by Bela of Hungary, which, however, arrived late: see Ch. 5, p. 189. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 178(6–7), refers to numerous troops enlisted "above all from the people of the Latins" (ἐκ τοῦ γένους μάλιστα τῶν Λατίνων).

33 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 238(92–92). See also Ch. 2, p. 108, and Ch. 4, p. 174.

34 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 379(89–92).

both sides of this struggle. Soldiers recruited from the Latin population of Constantinople formed a significant part of the imperial forces led by the *kai-sar* Conrad. Amounting to 750 men (250 riders and 500 foot soldiers), they were as numerous as all the imperial guards and aristocratic retinues staying in the capital at the time.<sup>35</sup>

The capture of Varna by Tsar Kaloyan of Bulgaria (March 1201) indicates the reliability and loyalty of Latin troops, who in this instance resisted fiercely, to the point of being willing to be slaughtered in imperial service. Even if Latins in the Byzantine military were not loyal in certain cases, fighting for pay and often intent on their own advantage, they were hired frequently for good reason.<sup>36</sup>

A case of extreme disloyalty involved German, rather than Norman, mercenaries. According to Eustathios, who cites an old fisherman named Manouel Aboudimos as his source, five Germans were involved in the capture of Thessalonike. They encountered Aboudimos in the early morning on the day of the city's fall, engaged him in a discussion of their intentions—certain that he would relay their plans to the Byzantines in the city—and deprived him of his right hand before he could escape. The day before, three men from the “Alamannic division” (Ἀλαμανικὸν τάγμα) had openly colluded with the enemy. Once again, the motivation was likely some financial reward.<sup>37</sup>

## 1.2 *Ourselios (Roussel De Bailleul)*

In the *Alexiad*, Οὐρσέλιος—the Norman Roussel de Bailleul<sup>38</sup>—is introduced early on, which has to do with Anna's historiographical agenda. She states that, having been unable to follow the emperor Romanos IV Diogenes to the battle of Manzikert against the Turkish invaders (1071), the young Alexios Komnenos's first chance to prove his valor related to events surrounding Roussel.<sup>39</sup>

The background is related by other sources, while Anna focuses on the single episode involving her father. From these sources, it emerges that Roussel had originally come to southern Italy with Robert Guiscard, then for some reason—perhaps for better financial or career opportunities—accompanied another Norman mercenary leader, Robert Crispin (d. 1073), to Romania where

35 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 384(13–19). See also *ibid.*, p. 386(72–86).

36 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 532(21)–533(41). See Cheynet (1990), pp. 452–453; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 179, n. 195 (p. 524).

37 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 92(15–32).

38 While Bryennios also refers to him as Οὐρσέλιος, Zonaras's history uses the form Ρουσέλιος.

39 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.1.1, p. 11(20–22). On Roussel de Bailleul in general, see Simpson (2000); Lebeniotes (2004).

he entered Byzantine service in 1069/70. He fought against Pecheneg troops and later at Manzikert in 1071. According to a seal attributed to him and dated to ca. 1072, Roussel had obtained the high dignity of βέστης.<sup>40</sup> Anna's remark that he had been in the Byzantine army for a long time (ἀνέκαθεν) is misleading, but the events occurred over half a century before she composed the *Alexiad*, and her statement had no significance for her wider intention.

The setting of the stage by Anna renders young Alexios's success against Roussel all the more remarkable. Roussel is said to have quickly assembled a large army. A part of this army was composed of Normans, the other consisting of diverse soldiers. Roussel threatened to become a "dangerous rebel" (βαρὺς τύραννος) at a troublesome time for the Byzantines. Being "power-hungry" (τυραννικώτατος), he was encouraged to rebel openly due to the disastrous situation in which the empire found itself. He prevailed over famous and experienced Byzantine commanders.<sup>41</sup>

Zonaras, who was a monk by the time he was writing, displays a critical attitude towards the Komnenian military aristocracy and the ideals it represented and therefore has virtually no praise for Roussel as a war hero. Zonaras narrates that Roussel had 400 men from his own people (ὁμογενεῖς)—that is, Normans—when, under the commander Isaakios Komnenos (1073), he was sent out against the Turks. He defected at Ikonion, Isaakios was defeated by the Turks, and Michael VII sent a new army under the *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas. Offered a pardon, Roussel refused, "boasting like a barbarian," and then defeated the *kaisar's* forces. Barbaric overboldness (βαρβαρική θρασύτης) also led to his capture by Turks. Before his capture, however, the emperor was apparently desperate enough to offer another pardon and the dignity of *κουροπαλάτης*, even sending him his wife and children as a sign of his sincerity. Zonaras's

40 IOANNES ZONARAS, pp. 704(17)–705(3); Cheynet (2003), no. 20.

41 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.1.2, p. 11(22)–12(39). NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, Hist. II.14–25, pp. 167(3)–197(8), devotes a large part of Book II of his ὕλη ἱστορίας to Roussel's rebellion, including events preceding Alexios's involvement (ca. 1073–75), which is probably why Anna summarizes and reproduces only what is most essential for her purposes—she herself refers to her husband's work. An interesting detail is the comment that Alexios spared some of Roussel's men because they were Christians (p. 185[22–30]), which points to Christianity as shared marker of identity between Byzantines and Latins. Bryennios also reveals that a leader of Norman mercenaries in the army of the *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas, Πάπας by name, went over with his men to their fellow Normans and Roussel (p. 169[13–24]). It is likely that they did so because they knew the other Normans, but also because they thought that Roussel would be victorious and that it would be to their advantage. On this rebellion, see also Cheynet (1990), no. 97, pp. 78–79. For Roussel's portrayal in Attaleiates's history and the Skylitzes continuation, see Gautier's references in his edition of Bryennios's history.



comment that the barbarian could not be placated implies the utter weakness of the imperial government, emboldening a Norman adventurer to do as he pleased. Even his capture by the Turks did not stop Roussel, for his wife paid his ransom and thus obtained his release, re-establishing his dominion in the theme of Armeniakon.<sup>42</sup>

Another episode to glorify Anna's father in the *Alexiad* is constructed around Alexios's capture of Roussel. Anna refers to the description of this event in her husband Bryennios's historical work,<sup>43</sup> but offers her own version to further develop the image of her father, who, according to Anna, had risen to a high command under Michael VII due to his exceptional skill as a general at that time. The previous emphasis on Roussel's invincibility serves to make Alexios's success against him appear spectacular. She relates that the Norman's tactical skill was far inferior to that of her father, even if Alexios was still young at the time. Roussel is said to have been pressured into seeking an alliance with "the barbarian Toutach" (a Turkish emir). Nonetheless, Alexios managed to prevent this by luring Toutach into an alliance with the emperor instead. According to Anna, Alexios told the Turkish ruler that the "barbarian Ourselios" was not to be trusted and would eventually turn against him, which persuaded him to arrest the Norman general and send him to Amaseia and into Alexios's custody.<sup>44</sup>

The following points to heterogeneous attitudes toward Roussel. Initially unable to provide the money he had promised Toutach, Alexios raised it from the population of Amaseia. Knowing that their pledge of support was unreliable, he pretended to blind Roussel, which pleased the people because he had sacked numerous places in Asia Minor. They then willingly contributed the funds promised to Toutach, to the discouragement of those who had intended to liberate the prisoner.<sup>45</sup> Anna does not reveal why this faction wished to see him free. Perhaps they considered that Roussel would show them gratitude and, as an able general, would protect them from foes and rulers demanding higher taxes. Bryennios says that some claimed Roussel had done no wrong to them, but the speech to the inhabitants of Amaseia that he attributes to Alexios also describes certain leading citizens as opportunistic, a version of which also appears in Anna's account.<sup>46</sup>

42 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, pp. 709(11)–712(12).

43 See above.

44 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.2.1–3, pp. 13(58)–14(92). It is noteworthy that Muslims are usually referred to as barbarians when mentioned together with Latins. That this is reversed here is perhaps due to the diplomatic context.

45 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.2.4–I.3.2, pp. 14(92)–17(73).

46 NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* II.23, pp. 191(9)–193(2).

What follows is revealing of positive Byzantine attitudes towards Roussel, but also towards other Westerners who had made a career in the army. Dokeianos, a cousin of Alexios, is said to have grieved at the sight of Roussel who, being led by the hand, appeared to be blind. Dokeianos accused Alexios of cruelty and censured him for allowing the unfit punishment of blinding for such “a noble man and clearly a hero” (ἀνὴρ γεννάδης τὲ καὶ ἀντικρυς ἤρωσ).<sup>47</sup> In private, Alexios showed him that the Norman general was unharmed. At first astonished, Dokeianos was extremely pleased. Anna adds that everyone reacted in the same way when they learned of it, the *basileus* Michael included. Even if she exaggerates the reaction, her account suggests the enormous respect that military prowess enjoyed among the Byzantine aristocracy, the emperor and his family included, even outweighing open rebellion against the ruler.<sup>48</sup>

Zonaras echoes this praise in his otherwise unflattering portrayal by introducing Roussel as a “Latin extremely skilled in war” (Λατίνος πολεμικώτατος).<sup>49</sup> The praise of two earlier historiographers—Attaleiates and Ioannes Skylitzes—is much more explicit, even if the assessment of the Skylitzes continuation might well depend on Attaleiates.<sup>50</sup>

Overall, the image of Roussel is ambivalent. His praise as a war hero and skilled general is set against severe censure of his disloyalty. Anna’s *Alexiad*, in line with Zonaras, does not hold back when criticizing rebels during the period before her father’s accession and in his early years. Roussel is included among these rebels, with Anna calling him one of the “deadly diseases” affecting Romania.<sup>51</sup> Zonaras, based on Attaleiates and the continuation of Skylitzes, reveals that Roussel had already been disloyal under Romanos Diogenes

47 NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* II.25, p. 195(13–17), expresses himself very similarly, but according to him Dokeianos also stressed the potential (military) usefulness of Roussel for the “affairs of the Romans,” which Alexios supposedly deprived them of.

48 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.3.3–4, p. 17(73–75). See Neville (2012), pp. 83–84.

49 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 697(3–5).

50 MICHAEL ATTALEIATES, *Hist.*, p. 159(24)–160(3): “A great soldier and general, capable of healing many of the flaming ills of the troubled east, a reasonable man and not devoid of solid sagacity” (τηλικούτος στρατιώτης καὶ στρατηγός, δυνάμενος ἐν τοῖς φλεγμαίνουσι κακοῖς τῆς ἐφ’ ἡς ἰάσασθαι πολλὰ τῶν αὐτῆς συντριμμάτων [...] λογικὸς τε ὢν καὶ φρονήσεως οὐκ ἀμοιρῶν στερρᾶς), IOANNES SKYLITZES, *Hist.* (cont.), p. 144(14): “a valiant man skilled in war” (ἀνὴρ γενναῖος καὶ πολεμικός). On Attaleiates’s “sympathy” for Roussel, see also Tinnefeld (1971), pp. 142–143, who shows how this flattering assessment has a lot to do with Attaleiates’s attitude toward the emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates and his strong criticism of Michael VII and his logothete Nikephoros, which once again points to the degree to which the portrayal of Latins is marked by introspective tendencies. On Attaleiates’s assessment, see also Krallis (2012).

51 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.10.1, p. 34(7–14).

(1068–71). A commander named Tarchaneiotēs had persuaded him to disregard the commands of the emperor, and they deserted shortly before the battle of Manzikert. Zonaras's criticism of Roussel accords with Anna in this instance.<sup>52</sup>

Both the criticism and the praise of Roussel's comrade Robert Crispin are similar. Praised for his bravery and having accomplished great deeds for the Byzantines, he is also censured for his rebellious behavior. He, too, however, was offered a pardon and, unlike Roussel, accepted it, but was poisoned and died.<sup>53</sup>

Anna has no more to say about Roussel because his role in terms of the *Alexiad* was fulfilled, whereas other Byzantine sources recount his end, the portrayal of which again points to heterogeneous attitudes. He remained in Byzantine captivity for two years but was released in 1077. Alexios personally arranged that he would lack nothing, Byrennios records, and attempted to placate the emperor's anger.<sup>54</sup> Zonaras's version of this episode displays an unsympathetic stance as compared to the military aristocrat Bryennios.<sup>55</sup> Michael VII was in dire need of good generals, so he reinstated Roussel as a commander under Alexios Komnenos,<sup>56</sup> just as he had reinstated the rebellious Robert Crispin. After his release in 1077, Roussel first fought the rebel Nikephoros Bryennios successfully,<sup>57</sup> but when Nikephoros Botaneiates, the future emperor, revolted as well, Roussel eventually went over to his side. However, the logothete Nikephoros, a favorite of Michael VII, fled to him, whereupon Roussel suddenly died, giving rise to the suspicion that he had been poisoned by the logothete.<sup>58</sup>

52 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 699(6–13).

53 For the praise for his military prowess, see MICHAEL ATTALIEIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 97(27–28), 132(5–9); IOANNES SKYLITZES, *Hist. (cont.)*, 134(20–22). He is censured for his disloyalty, treason, and greed, attributes that are declared to be typical of the Frankish people by the Skylitzes continuation (p. 135[1–4]), an assessment perhaps influenced by the recent First Crusade and the crusaders' disregard of the oaths sworn to Alexios I. However, Attaleiates makes a similar, formulaic judgment (p. 94[21–22]), which, contrasted with the aforesaid virtues, points to an ambivalent attitude. See also Krallis (2012), pp. 157–169.

54 NIKEPHOROS BRYENNIOS, *Hist.* II.27–28, p. 201(1–7).

55 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 712(10–12).

56 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 717(1–8).

57 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 717(8–13). See Cheynet (1990), no. 104, p. 83.

58 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 725(11–14).

## 2 In Various Contexts

### 2.1 *The Differing Degrees of “Romanization” of Ἀλέξανδρος (Alexander of Gravina) and Βασσαβίλας (Robert of Bassonville)*

Strife within the later Norman kingdom of Sicily also led to contacts with Byzantines and the migration of Normans to Romania. Dissatisfied nobles in conflict with Hauteville rule in Sicily and southern Italy made common cause with the empire, notably supporting the Byzantine offensive in Italy in 1155–56.<sup>59</sup> Two prominent representatives of this group were Alexander of Conversano, count of Gravina, and Robert, count of Bassonville and Loritello. Many others go unmentioned, in line with the generic tendency of Greek literature of the middle period in dealing with non-Byzantines.<sup>60</sup> Alexander receives a mere four lines in the *Historia*, and Bassonville, although he plays a major role in Kinnamos’s description of the Italian war, does not even appear in Choniates’s history.

Alexander served Emperor Manouel as an envoy, as noted by Kinnamos, but the main role he plays is in the history’s account of the Italian war. This account is much more detailed than that of Choniates. Kinnamos apparently deemed it important to exculpate Manouel for the ultimate failure of this enterprise. He might have participated in the campaign, even if he was still a boy at the time. At the least, he used first-hand reports from eyewitnesses.<sup>61</sup> Alexander of Gravina appears first in Kinnamos’s narrative as an envoy dispatched to deal with the Second Crusade (1147). He is introduced as “an Italian by birth who had been count of Gravina, an Italian city, but who had along with others been driven from the realm by the tyrant of Sicily [Roger II] and consequently had

59 For a general bibliography, see the references in Ch. 9.

60 See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 58, 84–85, on those individuals, Andrew of Rupecanina, who migrated to Romania in 1161, and Jordan, who served as Manouel’s envoy to the pope in 1166. Jordan of Capua, son of Roger, prince of Capua, a defeated opponent of Roger II, is accorded a brief mention in IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 37(8–18) and described as an “Italian distinguished and renowned by birth, ruler of Kapye, a most populous and prosperous Italian city” (ἦν δὲ ὁ Ἰταλιώτης γένει μὲν περιφανῆς καὶ ἐπίδοξος, Καπύης δὲ πόλεως ἐξάρχων Ἰταλικῆς πολυανθρωποτάτης ἄγαν καὶ εὐδαίμονος). He is said to have been forced to escape to Constantinople because of King Roger’s greed for the principality. On Roger II’s portrayal, see the second section of Ch. 9, for the generic tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

61 See the introduction in IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 3 and n. 9. For Choniates’s brief account, see Ch. 9, pp. 288–291.

become the emperor's voluntary [subject]."<sup>62</sup> He then joined the commanders Michael Palaiologos and Ioannes Doukas on the expedition to Italy.<sup>63</sup>

Kinnamos illustrates how socio-political tensions within the kingdom of Sicily greatly facilitated the Byzantine advance. Robert of Bassonville (Βασσαβίλας), Kinnamos explains, was a nephew of the "tyrant" Roger II. Dissatisfied with his position under William I after Roger's death, he sent envoys to Barbarossa's court to ask for assistance. The envoys were unsuccessful, but they encountered Alexander on the return journey, who informed them that the "emperor of the Romans" was planning to subdue "Italy" and had charged Palaiologos with the task. Bassonville met Palaiologos in Viesti, a city that had pledged allegiance to Emperor Manouel. They exchanged pledges (πίστεις) concerning the expedition. His support quickly paid off, for Robert's brother William, "himself already friendly to the Romans," assured the Byzantines of the control of the Bassonville lands.<sup>64</sup>

From Kinnamos's account, both Alexander and Robert played a major role in winning over Bari. Alexander acted as an agent in the city, offering Byzantine gold to citizens who would transfer their allegiance to the *basileus*, while Robert contributed a large force, the sight of which is said to have persuaded the defenders of the citadel to surrender.<sup>65</sup>

The following narrative suggests that neither Kinnamos nor the Byzantine generals regarded the collaboration with Robert as one between equals, but perhaps the generals had allowed the man to assume as much, a common practice of Byzantines dealing with Latin allies from a standpoint of superiority. After the Byzantines obtained a promise from the citizens of Monopoli to hand over their city within a certain time frame Manouel's generals received a message from Bassonville that heralded tension between the allies. The Norman nobleman asked for assistance against an approaching Sicilian force, which they refused, referring to the terms agreed in Viesti: Bassonville's task was to help the Byzantines lay claim to "Italy" and he could expect imperial support in doing so, but they were in no way obliged to assist him in other matters.<sup>66</sup>

62 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 67(13)–68(12); see p. 67(13–17): “ἀνὴρ Ἴταλὸς μὲν τὸ γένος Γραβίνης δὲ πόλεως Ἰταλικῆς κόμης γεγονώς, πρὸς τε τοῦ Σικελίας τυράννου ἄμα πλείοσιν ἄλλοις τῆς τε ἀρχῆς ἀποβιβασθεὶς καὶ βασιλεῖ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτόμολος γεγονώς.”

63 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 135(12–17).

64 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 137(22)–138(4).

65 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 138(22)–140(23). It should be noted here that this refusal to accept Byzantine gold is one of the many instances in which the historiographers argue against a literal interpretation of the *topoi* they themselves employ chiefly for the sake of tradition and social distinction; the *topos* in this case is the barbarian or Latin greed for money and precious objects.

66 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 147(3–17).

Kinnamos also appears to indicate that the main reason for Bassonville's collaboration with Byzantium was ultimately one of self-interest. Bassonville insisted that he was in great danger, which ultimately convinced the Byzantines to come to his assistance. However, they demanded additional guarantees from their ally because a rumor had circulated that Robert intended to betray the Byzantines to the Sicilian commander Richard of Andria. They subsequently treated him with no further suspicion, though, which implies that Robert gave them some security that would prevent him from conspiring in the future.<sup>67</sup>

By contrast, a certain esteem for Alexander's service to the emperor and his "Byzantinization" is apparent. Alexander of Conversano reappears as a commander of the "German" (that is, the French) contingent dispatched to Italy and is introduced again as a "Longibard [that is, from Apulia] by birth, but extremely devoted to the Romans and the emperor's affairs."<sup>68</sup> For a moment at least, Alexander's collaboration with the Byzantines paid off. After having defeated one of King William's armies, the Byzantine forces managed to acquire more towns and cities, including Gravina, Alexander's territory.<sup>69</sup>

Kinnamos, with hindsight and attempting to divert blame from Manouel, is critical of the Byzantine commander Doukas's continued support for Bassonville, after Palaiologos succumbed to a disease. Bassonville, displeased with Palaiologos, had left the army. Robert had asked for a loan, "either, as I think, furnishing himself pretexts for profit, or truly gripped by lack of money," but Palaiologos had limited himself to offering a lesser sum as a gift from the emperor. Doukas saw greater value in Bassonville's continued support and gave him the required amount, whereupon he rejoined the army.<sup>70</sup>

The subsequent narrative clearly implies that many of Byzantium's Italian clients generally acted out of self-interest and were ready to abandon the imperial cause when the situation began to look less favorable. Bassonville, dissatisfied with the progress made, pretended to leave to raise more troops, but abandoned the army altogether.<sup>71</sup> The Byzantines were still relying on him for fresh reinforcements, not knowing that Bassonville had already abandoned

67 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 147(17)–148(1).

68 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 148(1–7); see p. 148(5–6): "Λογιβάρδος μὲν τὸ γένος λίαν δὲ εὐνοϊκῶς ἔχων ἔς τε Ῥωμαίους καὶ τὰ βασιλέως πράγματα."

69 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 149(12)–150(20).

70 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 151(20)–152(10); see p. 152(2–3): "εἴτε κέρδους οἶμαι προφάσεις ἑαυτῷ ποριζόμενος εἴτε καὶ σπάνει χρημάτων ἀληθῶς ἐχόμενος."

71 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 164(21)–165(15).

them. Although Kinnamos states that Robert delayed “willfully or by accident,” he is probably referring to the expectations of the Byzantines in Italy.<sup>72</sup>

In retrospect, Bassonville had collaborated with Byzantium for a short period of time in what appears to have been an alliance of limited purpose. Alexander served Manouel for many years and was thus more memorable. However, even he is a marginal figure in Choniates’s account.<sup>73</sup>

The unequal attention devoted to two of Byzantium’s main Norman clients in southern Italy, shows how two historiographers dealing with the same historical period could differ depending on their intended audience and agenda, the written and oral sources they consulted, the time during which they were active, and their personal relationship with the narrated events.

## 2.2 *Cultural Disinterest, Integration, and Acceptance*

Eustathios of Thessalonike highlights the diversity of Latin peoples who lived in the empire at a time when Andronikos Komnenos turned against them. Besides Genoese and Pisans, he names Tuscans (Τούσκοι), the “Lombard people” (φύλον Λαμπαρδικόν), i.e., individuals hailing from northern Italy, and Λογγίβαρδοι, alluding to people from southern Italy. He adds that there were many others.<sup>74</sup>

When praising her father’s foundation of a grammar school for orphans “from all kinds of peoples” (ἐκ παντοδαποῦ γένους), Anna refers to learning Greek.<sup>75</sup> According to Magdalino, the foundation of this ὀρφανοτροφεῖον greatly enhanced the possibility of social mobility for children whose parents did not speak Greek.<sup>76</sup> The work of scholars such as Hugo Eterianus, Leo Tuscus, Burgundio of Pisa, Moses of Bergamo, or James of Venice also demonstrate increased Western interest in Greek language and literature in the 1100s.<sup>77</sup>

These scholars go unmentioned in Byzantine literature, despite their presence in Byzantium and despite their learning the Greek language and translating religious works into Latin.<sup>78</sup> By contrast, Byzantine scholars did not think

72 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 165(15)–170(5). See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 60–61. For Kinnamos’s account of the war, see Ch. 9, pp. 279–288.

73 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 91(18–21).

74 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 56(11–14). See also Ch. 2.

75 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* xv.7.9, p. 484(9–15).

76 Magdalino (1993b), p. 330.

77 On them, see Berschin (1988), ch. 11; Cameron (2016), pp. 76–79; Rodriguez Suarez (2016); Kapriev (2018) with the critical review by Riedl (2019).

78 Michael Choniates appears to allude to a Latin interest in Greek manuscripts by saying that Italians filled whole cargo ships with them and took them to their homeland. It is plausible, however, that most or all of these manuscripts were destined to be recycled: see Magdalino (1993b), pp. 323–324.

it worthwhile to learn the Latin language except for practical purposes, notably diplomatic dealings, and this was in spite of the increased relevance of the West in Byzantium at the time. Of course, Latin intellectuals influenced developments in Byzantium in certain ways, especially through religious controversies (often by means of interpreters). Nevertheless, the sum of the evidence clearly suggests that Byzantine literati held an attitude of superiority and self-sufficiency. Only in the following century would they devote more attention to Latin literature.<sup>79</sup>

The same observation holds true for other Latins coming to Romania, many of whom were advisers and clients of the emperor Manouel. As a rule, they remain anonymous in Byzantine literature.<sup>80</sup> In Kinnamos's account of the embassy to the crusader polities after Empress Eirene-Bertha's death in 1160, however, there is a reference to a "Theophylaktos, an Italian man called Exoubitos," to whom a seal can be attributed that identifies him as "grand interpreter" (μέγας διερμηνευτής)—the head of interpreters of Latin in imperial service.<sup>81</sup>

Some Latins receive marginal attention in the *Alexiad* because they held important positions at the court of Anna's father, reflecting the increased relevance and usefulness of the West to Byzantium. They include Marino, a member of an important Neapolitan family, the Μαῖιστρομίλιοι—derived from *magister militum*. Some representatives of this family were dukes of Naples. The first of these dukes might have been a Greek-speaker, for Naples had important ties to Romania. Anna also mentions a certain Ἀδράλεστος, likely another Norman who defected to the Byzantine side. He is said to have known the "Keltic" language.<sup>82</sup> Both Marino and Adralestos acted as envoys to Bohemond during the negotiations that led to the treaty of Deabolis. Marino may well be the *doux* of Amalfi who bore the title of *sebastos* in 1097/98, attributed to him

79 Schreiner (1992), pp. 562–564; Dagron (1994); Oikonomides (1999); Ciggaar (2003), esp. pp. 104–106; Zorzi (2012), pp. 218–219; Mitsiou (2015), p. 69; Tinnefeld (2018). There is, however, a non-Byzantine, Hugo Eterianus, who composed two treatises in both Latin and Greek in 1166 and 1176–77 upon the request of Emperor Manouel I, and at least the Greek version of the 1166 treatise, devoted to "the Father is greater than I" controversy, appears to have been available in Constantinople. See Jensen (2018); Kapriev (2018).

80 See the summary in Magdalino (1993b), pp. 221–223. For a discussion of the aforesaid generic tendency, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

81 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 208(21)–209(1); Kresten and Seibt (2002); Shandrovskaia (2016), pp. 308–309. An interesting aspect discussed by Kresten and Seibt is the presence of Latin letters on the seal illustrating Theophylaktos's origin and function in imperial service. They hypothesize, albeit without corresponding evidence, that this seal was used to certify translations.

82 Skoulatos (1980), no. 2, p. 4.



by Anna as well. He must have been an eminent person associated with the *basileus*. Marino is the first signatory from the imperial court in the treaty of Deabolis quoted by the *Alexiad*, although Anna remarks that he had not always observed his oath of loyalty to the emperor, having been tempted by promises of reward to betray him, though Alexios continued to trust him. This is an indication that, during the difficult first half of his reign, Alexios was accustomed to dealing with constant threats to his rule and accordingly adopted a conciliatory stance, attempting to persuade men of doubtful loyalty to cooperate by offering attractive rewards. Moreover, Anna makes clear that Marino was valuable to Alexios as an adviser and agent because of his intelligence and knowledge of Latin customs.<sup>83</sup>

The treaty of Deabolis also names William (Γελλίελλμος ὁ Γανζή),<sup>84</sup> “Ritzardos” (Richard of the Principate), Paul “the Roman” (otherwise unknown),<sup>85</sup> “Riskardos” (a relative of Bohemond), and Geoffrey (Ἰοσφρὲ Μαλής). Marquis de la Force observes that the signatories chosen by Alexios represented three distinct groups which played a role in the symbolic defeat and humiliation of Bohemond: his kinsmen (Richard of the Principate, the king of Hungary, and Richard the seneschal, represented by others), crusaders who had taken service with Alexios (William, Geoffrey, Paul), and the *basileus*’s retainers from southern Italy (Marino of Naples, Roger, son of Dagobert, Petros Aliphas, and Humbert, son of Raoul).<sup>86</sup> An important position in the Byzantine navy under Alexios I was held by a certain Landoulphos, a Westerner, referred to by Anna as capable and experienced.<sup>87</sup>

Another indication of the migration of Latins to Romania is Choniates’s remark that war captives were sent to the emperor during the Italian war (1155–56), information omitted by Kinnamos. A settlement was constructed for them in a region of the Aegean called Βάρη καὶ Αὐλωνία (New-Bari, perhaps Valona, although scholars have struggled to identify the place),<sup>88</sup> evidence for the continued practice of Byzantine rulers of resettling peoples within the empire.

83 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.4.4, p. 395(58–63), XIII.9.1, p. 407(89)–408(92), XIII.9.8, p. 410(73–78), XIII.12.28, p. 423(42). See Marquis de la Force (1936), pp. 155–156; Skoulatos (1980), no. 124, pp. 195–196.

84 Skoulatos (1980), no. 80, p. 118. Nothing certain has been established about his identity.

85 Skoulatos (1980), no. 165, p. 261.

86 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.28, p. 423(42–48). See Marquis de la Force (1936), pp. 163–164.

87 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.10.2, p. 350(18–20), XII.8.8, p. 381(40–42). For further evidence on Landulf, see Magdalino (2003), pp. 51–53.

88 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 91(26–28). On the identification of the settlement, see Zorzi (2012), p. 149.

A noteworthy individual mentioned is Baldwin (d. 1176), the brother-in-law of Manouel I and brother of the empress Maria, and his military prowess made an impression not just on Choniates, but on the Byzantine military aristocracy. Choniates recounts that he accompanied his sister Philippa from Antioch to Constantinople to be married to Bela, the future king of Hungary.<sup>89</sup> He is remarkable in being the only known Latin among Manouel's senior commanders but unremarkable at the same time because he reflects the practice of assigning military commands based on kinship with the imperial family. The *Historia* states that the "brother of the emperor's wife, Baldouinos" commanded the right wing of the army during the battle of Myriokephalon.<sup>90</sup> The Antiochene nobleman is credited with dying a heroic death at Myriokephalon, where he fought bravely to the end together with his knights.<sup>91</sup>

Despite the limited treatment of him in Choniates's history—Kinnamos not mentioning him at all—it suggests that Baldwin of Antioch adapted to his new environment and was integrated, like numerous Western aristocrats before and after him. Nothing in the sources points to anything comparable to the disloyal behavior of the Norman commanders of the 1060s–70s, Roussel de Bailleul and Robert Crispin, or in the earlier years of Alexios I's reign (1081–1118). Imperial order was considerably more stable under Manouel than in the 1070s–90s or the period from 1180 to 1204.

### 3 The Foundation of Aristocratic Dynasties

Some Latins who came to Romania, chiefly under Alexios I, established aristocratic dynasties, which became increasingly "Byzantinized" over generations. They often rose to the status of Byzantine aristocrats through military service. Few such men in high command can be found in the period before the Komnenoi, however. After Alexios, members of the Komnenian aristocracy would lead the emperor's armies. Kinship with the imperial family was a decisive criterion for the selection of the generals, some of whom would be descendants of migrants from the West.<sup>92</sup> Only a

89 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 170(12–14).

90 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 180(84–86). See Zorzi (2012), p. 265.

91 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 181(7–13). See p. 181(11–13): "He was surrounded by the enemy and killed, and all his companions also fell and displayed deeds of bravery and the desperate courage of a valiant hand" (κυκλωθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν πολεμίων αὐτός τε κατακαίνεται καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ πίπτουσιν ἅπαντες ἀλκίης ἔργα καὶ χειρὸς γενναίας παράσθημα ἐνδειξάμενοι).

92 Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997), pp. 148, 351–352.

few were newcomers themselves, and they too owed their positions to kinship.<sup>93</sup>

The historiographical and other evidence suggests that the integration of known prominent Westerners into the Byzantine aristocracy went without noteworthy difficulty. Even non-Latins could become its respected members, a prominent example being the Axouchoi, a family of Turkish origin that became influential under Ioannes II and Manouel. This is in line with what the sources indicate about integration of Italian merchants, Varangians—even if they maintained distinct markers of identity—and imperial women and kinsmen of Latin origin.<sup>94</sup>

Normans, who came to reside in Romania chiefly as mercenaries, rose high in imperial favor. They were called Φραγγόπωλοι or Φραγγόπουλοι, a reference to their origin. Over the years, however, this designation became common and was probably no longer associated with being any less “Roman” than other members of the aristocracy.<sup>95</sup>

The same can be said of other families from high social strata who established themselves in Romania with varying degrees of success. These families do not appear to have introduced elements from their former cultures. They were Greek-speaking, integrated into the Byzantine Church, adapted to Byzantine aristocratic culture, and, for the second and subsequent generations, there is no evidence that they continued to speak their Western languages. Their Latin names were Hellenized. Among the most prominent and successful of these families were the Rogerioi, the Petraliphai, and the Raoul, who “became fully Byzantinized.”<sup>96</sup> The story of these families underlines an important feature of the Komnenian socio-political order, in spite of the fact that the importance of aristocratic birth increased and that newcomers often belonged to higher strata in their original social environment. Social mobility remained a possibility by means of education, imperial service, and advantageous marriage alliances.<sup>97</sup>

These families and their founders are differentiated as Latins in the *Alexiad*, whereas in histories covering later periods they are represented as members

93 Conrad of Montferrat (second section of Ch. 4), Hungarian princes (Ch. 5), and Baldwin of Antioch (above, p. 224).

94 See the previous chapters and Ch. 1, pp. 27–28; Lilie (1993a), p. 173.

95 Nicol (1979), pp. 114–116.

96 Nicol (1979), pp. 122–124. For further evidence of members of the said families, see Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997). For families not mentioned in Byzantine historiography, see also *ibid.*, esp. pp. 346–352.

97 Grünbart (2015), p. 32.

of Byzantine society. Often they adopted new names, which had nothing to do with concealing a non-Byzantine origin (as Nicol argues) and everything to do with the prestige of names employed, often reflecting advantageous marriage alliances with aristocrats and even, in some cases, with the (immediate) imperial family.<sup>98</sup>

Readers of the *Alexiad* encounter Peter of Alife (Caserta, Italy) or Peter d'Aulps (Provence)—depending on assumptions about his origin<sup>99</sup>—as “Petros of Aliphias,” as he called himself according to Anna. Initially a follower of Robert Guiscard, he was one of three Norman knights who engaged Emperor Alexios in battle at Dyrrachion, an occasion for Anna to introduce her father’s future follower, but also to present Alexios as a heroic, prudent warrior who could successfully defend himself.<sup>100</sup> As for Peter’s reasons to defect to Alexios’s side, Anna draws attention to the value Norman soldiers attached to good payment and the fact that Bohemond struggled to pay his men without delay as promised, which was exploited by the *basileus*. Alexios communicated to them that they should insist on their demands and that, should Bohemond be unwilling or unable to fulfill them, they were welcome to enter imperial service and receive the compensation they requested. Remarkably, Peter still enjoyed Bohemond’s trust, because he was charged with the defense of Pologoi when Bohemond was forced to retreat to Avlon due to the necessity to obtain funds from Guiscard to pay the troops.<sup>101</sup>

The *Alexiad* does not record Peter changing sides after the death of Robert Guiscard,<sup>102</sup> as this was a usual thing for Norman soldiers, but honors him as “a man famous for his deeds in war [...] who had always and unshakably kept faith with the autokrator.”<sup>103</sup> Anna reveals only that he came to Alexios in Philomelion<sup>104</sup> to inform the emperor about the dire situation in Antioch. He appears again as an adviser on the war with Bohemond in 1107–8 and again receives great praise. Moreover, Peter was a signatory to the treaty of Deabolis

98 Nicol (1979), p. 125, whose hypothesis appears to be colored by modern concepts associated with the nation state.

99 Zorzi (2012), p. 141.

100 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.6.8, p. 135(66–87). Anna also states in Book V.5.1, p. 153(69–74), that he conquered the region of Poloboi—Pologoi (see trans. Reinsch, p. 176, n. 44)—for Bohemond during Guiscard’s absence.

101 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.7.5, pp. 160(10)–161(28). On Norman susceptibility to mercenary service for the Byzantines, see the first section of this chapter.

102 Marquis de la Force (1936), p. 158.

103 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.4.4, p. 395(64–69); see p. 395(64–66): “ἀνὴρ κατὰ πόλεμον περιβόητος καὶ τὴν ὥς πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα πίστιν ἀκράδαντον δι’ ὅλου τηρήσας.”

104 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.6.1, p. 338(21–29).

(1108), due to his good standing with the emperor, his Western background, and his involvement in negotiations preceding the treaty.<sup>105</sup>

Peter founded and established a successful aristocratic family in Romania, as sources document, including histories that continue Anna's work. The name of the dynasty's founder became its name, his descendants becoming the Petraliphai.<sup>106</sup> Kinnamos mentions Nikephoros Petraliphas—a commander in the Byzantine army against the Hungarians in the 1160s<sup>107</sup>—and Konstantinos Petraliphas, who was entrusted with a sizeable force to campaign in Asia Minor (1175).<sup>108</sup> In Choniates's *Historia*, Ioannes Petraliphas figures as a supporter of Alexios Angelos's coup in 1195. He appears again in fragments of the history contained in Codex Q, where he is said to have handed over the palace of Blachernai to the crusaders in April 1204, when further resistance was considered futile. Accordingly, this action, if historically accurate, did not have anything to do with the Latin background of the family, which by that time was thoroughly Byzantine.<sup>109</sup>

A memorable episode narrated in the *Historia* is the heroic death of four Petraliphai brothers, “who were originally from the people of the Franks and had their residence near Didymoteichon” (ἐκ τοῦ τῶν Φράγγων γένους ὀρμώμενοι καὶ κατὰ τὸ Διδυμότειχον τὴν οἴκησιν ἔχοντες). During the siege of the fortress of Kerkyra, held by Roger II's Normans, Emperor Manouel selected the most formidable among his soldiers to mount a siege ladder attached to a ship. At first, no one dared to obey his command because of the danger involved. However, the Petraliphai were the first to do so after Poupakes, an official of Turkish origin and commander of the guard of Ioannes Axouchos. Poupakes and the Petraliphai are greatly praised as war heroes.<sup>110</sup>

The brothers remain obscure apart from the information that the family had a residence near Didymoteichon and that they were noble warriors. This suggests that, since the siege of Kerkyra took place before Choniates's lifetime, his source contained no further information. Choniates deemed it sufficient for his purposes, but gives the misleading impression that the Petraliphai were an obscure family, which is not in line with Kinnamos's references to Nikephoros

105 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.28, p. 423(43). On Peter's biography, see also Skoulatos (1980), no. 171, pp. 266–268.

106 Nicol (1979), p. 232; Zorzi (2012), pp. 141–142.

107 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 260(21–23).

108 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 292(14–17).

109 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 451(71), 570(38 app.). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 255, n. 39 (p. 566).

110 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 82(66)–85(39). On Poupakes, see Zorzi (2012), p. 142.

and Konstantinos.<sup>111</sup> Manouel is said to have promised great rewards to the courageous men who mounted the ladder, or to their families should they lose their lives. This likely led to a further improvement of the standing and influence of the Petraliphai.<sup>112</sup>

Two other Norman families, related to each other, were similarly successful in establishing themselves as members of Byzantine aristocratic society: the Rogerioi and the Raoul.<sup>113</sup> Raoul, the possible progenitor of this aristocratic family, argued against Robert Guiscard's invasion of Romania when Alexios became emperor, attempting to convince the Norman duke with reasonable arguments, according to Anna. Robert, reacting angrily, was also furious about the defection of Roger, Raoul's brother, to Alexios. Having arrived at Alexios's court, Roger revealed the details of his former master's war plans. Raoul found shelter with Bohemond in Avlon and thus escaped Robert's wrath.<sup>114</sup> Raoul's main function in Anna's account is probably to stress the unjust motives of Guiscard's invasion by showing that it was also criticized by fellow Normans.<sup>115</sup> Members of the Raoul family are then documented in the twelfth and subsequent centuries.<sup>116</sup> The Humbert (Οὐμπέρτος) mentioned in the treaty of Deabolis was probably his son, for he is named as the son of Γραούλ.<sup>117</sup> Not only was a Petraliphas involved in the proclamation of Alexios III according to Choniates, but also a certain Konstantinos Raoul.<sup>118</sup> As Raoul is referred to as Roger's brother and Roger in turn as the son of Dagobert (Τακουπέρτος), it can be inferred that the common ancestor of both families was this Dagobert.<sup>119</sup>

These two families are a striking example of the smooth integration of newcomers in the Byzantine aristocracy. As in so many things, the emperor and his

111 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 191, n. 61 (p. 577).

112 Magdalino (1993b), p. 210.

113 On the Raoul family, see the overview by Fassoulakis (1973).

114 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.15.2–6, pp. 49(56)–50(28).

115 Skoulatos (1980), no. 176, p. 271.

116 For the seals of the *ναβελίσσιμος* Niketas Raoul (first half of the 1100s) and of Manouel Raoul (twelfth or thirteenth century), see Jeffreys et al. (2017), Niketas 20122: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/boulloterion/454/>, Manuel 20128: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/boulloterion/3930/>.

117 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.28, p. 423(44). See Marquis de la Force (1936), p. 160; Skoulatos (1980), no. 81, pp. 118–119.

118 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 451(71–72). There is also a seal that names a *sebastos* Konstantinos Raoul Doukas and is dated to the late 1100s: see Jeffreys et al. (2017), Konstantinos 20520: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/boulloterion/5646/>.

119 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.28, p. 423(42–43). See Nicol (1979), p. 127.

family were models for the Komnenian aristocracy:<sup>120</sup> aristocrats imitated the marriages of members of the imperial family with Westerners.

Like Peter, Roger receives high praise in the *Alexiad*, in accordance with other sources that mention him, notably for his military prowess.<sup>121</sup> The “Frank Rogeres” was likewise involved in negotiations with Bohemond leading to the treaty of Deabolis (1108). Along with Marino of Naples, he is referred to as “sound of mind” (φρενήρης) and both are said to have been “perfectly familiar with Latin customs” (τῶν λατινικῶν ἑθῶν ἐν πείρᾳ καθεστηκότες πολλῇ)—that is, Norman customs. Roger is singled out as “famous for his manly courage” (ἐπ’ ἀνδρείᾳ περίκλυτος).<sup>122</sup> He served as a hostage along with Marino and Adralestos under the observance of Bohemond’s brother Guy. That he was accepted as a hostage is indicative of Roger’s value for Alexios, which can also be said of the other two men.<sup>123</sup> The funerary poem by Nikolaos Kallikles is along similar lines. Its first half emphasizes Roger’s zeal and courage in battle, mentioning the various regions where he lived or campaigned: Italy (perhaps in the sense of Apulia), Naples, Rome, Bari, Brindisi, and Calabria. He is compared to Roman generals of antiquity such as Scipio Africanus. Kallikles also mentions that he crossed the Adriatic and campaigned in Illyria, a reference to Guiscard’s invasion of Romania. Subsequently, much is made of Roger’s transformation into a faithful follower of Alexios, for whom he defeated Normans (Κέλτοί), Cumans and/or Pechenegs (Σκύθαι), and Turks (Πέρσαι). Attaining the rank of *sebastos*, he laid the groundwork for the ascendancy of his family.<sup>124</sup> The poem indicates the compatibility of Norman prowess with the values of the Byzantine military aristocracy. Given Kallikles’s and Roger’s proximity to the ruler, Alexios may have commissioned the poem himself.

Ioannes Dalassenos Rogerios is remarkable because he exemplifies the degree to which a Norman and his family could become part of the Byzantine world within a few decades. His name indicates that Rogeres or Rogerios had evolved into an aristocratic family name. He was probably a son of the *sebastos* Roger, and two other Rogerioi, Andronikos and Alexios, were his brothers. Dalassenos—the other family name Ioannes employed—evidently originated from a marriage alliance of his father with one of the relatives of Anna Dalassene, Alexios I’s mother.<sup>125</sup> Choniates omits Rogerios, perhaps because

120 Grünbart (2015) demonstrates this very well.

121 Skoulatos (1980), no. 180, pp. 275–278.

122 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.9.1, pp. 407(89)–408(5).

123 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.9.8, p. 410(73–78).

124 NIKOLAOS KALLIKLES, Poems, no. 19, pp. 93–95.

125 Barzos (1984), vol. 1, p. 349 and n. 7; Magdalino (1993b), p. 207; Nesbitt (2004), pp. 216–217.

his source material did not mention him or his introduction added nothing of value to his narrative. Kinnamos, however, who, as Manouel's retainer, had a closer relationship with the events, accords him a major role as a political actor during the earlier part of the emperor's reign.

Rogeros's attempted usurpation contrasts with the rebellion in the 1070s of Roussel, who did not aspire to the throne himself because he lacked the necessary connections and level of integration for acceptance as *basileus*, but resorted to proclaiming Ioannes Doukas.<sup>126</sup> Kinnamos refers to Rogeros's marriage to Maria, daughter of Emperor Ioannes II. He had risen to the rank of *kaisar*, documented on seals, after the death of Nikephoros Bryennios (1138) and was the son-in-law of Ioannes and Manouel I's brother-in-law. In addition, he was created *panypersebastos*, also according to a seal.<sup>127</sup> Under the Komnenian political order, this was a plausible, if insufficient, basis from which to aspire to the imperial throne.<sup>128</sup> Kinnamos explains how Rogeros did precisely that at a propitious moment, namely after the news of Ioannes II's death had reached Constantinople, but when Manouel had yet to arrive in the capital. Rogeros won over an exile from southern Italy, Robert, prince of Capua,<sup>129</sup> and 400 supporters. This suggests that Ioannes, while being fully "Byzantinized," was in contact with Normans in the capital. Maria, the *kaisar*'s wife, tried to persuade him to desist from his plan, but he remained "stiff in his opinion and cherished an extremely powerful desire for the imperial throne" (ισχυρογνώμων και δεινώς βασιλειών), characteristic of Komnenian pretenders as described in Byzantine historiography. Maria notified Manouel's representatives in Constantinople and they managed to manipulate the *kaisar* into leaving the capital where they could contain him, avoiding harm to him, his family, and supporters.<sup>130</sup> Ioannes Rogeros's attempt lacked sufficient support.<sup>131</sup>

There is further evidence of Rogeros's flawless integration in the Byzantine world. Manouel pardoned him—it was usual in the Komnenian period to accord lenient treatment to aristocrats who had engaged in treacherous activities, which is probably why Kinnamos only implies his pardon. In addition, as a close relative, Rogeros was a significant factor politically and for purposes of

126 See above, section 1.2.

127 Nesbitt (2004), p. 212.

128 Two brief poems in MARC. COD. 524, no. 52, p. 21, and no. 59, pp. 28–29, clearly indicate the importance Ioannes attached to his connection with the imperial dynasty through his purple-born wife Maria and his previous kinship with the Dalassenoi.

129 On him, see above, p. 218, n. 60.

130 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 36(20)–38(5).

131 Magdalino (1993b), p. 209.



diplomacy. His mission to Antioch was to arrange a marriage alliance between Constance, heiress of the principality of Antioch, and himself—his wife Maria having died earlier<sup>132</sup>—but “because he was too old, Constance did not look at him with pleasure” (ἔξωρον ὄντα οὐ σὺν ἡδονῇ Κωνσταντζα εἶδεν). Political motives for the *kaisar*’s rejection played a role, as Kinnamos indicates, notably a concern for the survival of the autonomous principality of Antioch.<sup>133</sup> Having returned to the capital, he became seriously ill (probably after 1166), was tonsured, and put on the “black garb” (of a monk)—an indication that it was common for aristocrats with a Latin background to embrace Byzantine religious markers. Indications of further religious integration and a concern for aristocratic status are poems that identify Ioannes Rogerios and his wife as patrons, as well as the foundation of a monastic complex referred to by a seal of Andronikos Rogerios and by Balsamon in an epigram.<sup>134</sup> The family continues to appear in later sources.<sup>135</sup>

A special case is that of the Gidoi. Although the connection is highly uncertain, it remains possible that their progenitor was Bohemond’s brother Guy (Γίδος) who, like Roger, Peter, and Raoul, defected to Alexios’s side.<sup>136</sup> Guy was of greater political importance due to his kinship with Bohemond and may not have remained in imperial service permanently. Indicative of his significance is Anna’s statement that, during Robert Guiscard’s invasion of Romania (1082), Alexios offered Guy not only a sumptuous title and a rich gift of money but also a matrimonial connection, presumably with one of the *basileus*’s relatives. Guy is said to have accepted, but remained at Bohemond’s side, keeping the matter secret.<sup>137</sup> He reappears only during Bohemond’s invasion of Romania,

132 In 1144 or 1145; see Barzos (1984), vol. 1, no. 75, pp. 348–356.

133 Manouel probably misjudged the situation or felt there was nothing or little to lose in trying; see Ch. 15, p. 424.

134 MARC. COD. 524, nos. 52, 59; Nesbitt (2004), pp. 214–216; Grünbart (2015), p. 167 (comparison with other aristocratic patrons).

135 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 122(1–3), 123(9–13), 178(9–17). Nicol (1979), pp. 125–127, and Nesbitt (2004), pp. 213–217, refer to more members of the family. Andronikos Komnenos preferred the more prestigious name of Komnenos. Some family members continued to bear the name Rogerios/Rogeres/Rogeros, however, notably Andronikos Rogerios, documented in 1191 and on a seal. A Leon Rogeros figures in MARC. COD. 524, no. 113, p. 129, as grandson of a *sebastos* (possibly Anna’s Roger, son of Dagobert) and son of a *prōtonōbelissimos*. In the same prayer, he refers to himself as translator of Latin phrases (λατινογλώσσους ἐχμεταφράζων φράσεις), which indicates that Leon served the imperial government as an interpreter and that the family may have maintained some connection with their Western origin.

136 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 425, n. 57 (pp. 737–738). On Anna’s portrayal of Normans, see also the first section of Ch. 9.

137 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.5.2, p. 176(43–47).

in which he exemplifies the Norman susceptibility to the prospects of a career in imperial service. Alexios produced forged letters that were designed to make Bohemond believe that several of his retainers, Guy among them, were planning to go over to the emperor, presumably in exchange for favors. Bohemond is said to have been gravely worried, thinking the letters were genuine, although Anna believes that he suspected Alexios's purpose. He, therefore, knowing of the usefulness of these "valiant" men (γενναῖοι), did not discharge them and pretended that nothing was wrong.<sup>138</sup>

The standing of the Gidoi family in the late twelfth century is indicated by the role that a certain Alexios Gidos played in the military. In Choniates's *Historia*, he is mentioned as δομέστικος of the west during the passage of the Third Crusade, but in Eustathios's account as "grand *domestikos* of the east" and commander of the Byzantine forces dispatched against the Normans by Emperor Andronikos. In another passage relating to the year 1194, Choniates records that Alexios led "eastern regiments" against the Vlachs and Cumans. These references indicate that, during the time of the *domestikos* Alexios, the Gidoi were a family to be reckoned with.<sup>139</sup> Alexios escaped a disastrous battle against Vlachs and Cumans with his life, but his later fate is unknown. Andronikos Gidos, plausibly a relative of his, appears towards the end of Choniates's work. He is said to have served Theodoros I Laskaris of Nicaea and defeated about 300 Latins sent from Constantinople to support the co-emperor of Trebizond, David Komnenos (in 1206). Given the rarity of the name Gidos, he may be identical with the ruler of Trebizond of the same name who ruled from 1222 to 1235.<sup>140</sup>

If the Gidoi mentioned by Choniates were a family with a Latin background and descended from the Gidos in the *Alexiad*, it would confirm the hypothesis derived from other known cases, namely that the integration of Latins into the aristocracy did not cause noteworthy difficulties and that their Latin background was deemed so insignificant that it did not need to be recorded.

Similarly, the Latin origin of the Lampardas family is indicated only by the name itself, derived from "Lombard" (Λαμπάρδος) and "Lombardy" (Λαμπαρδία).

138 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.4.5–9, pp. 395(74)–397(40).

139 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 72(15–18); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 403(62–64), 446(63–70). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 425, n. 57 (pp. 737–738), and two seals of an Alexios Gidos, *megas domestikos* of the west: Jeffreys et al. (2017), Alexios 20103: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Alexios/20103/>.

140 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 641(42–49). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 399, n. 334 (p. 632).

Andronikos Lampardas (in Kinnamos) or Lapardas (in Choniates) was a successful general under Manouel I and the husband of his niece Theodora.<sup>141</sup> A certain Alexios Giphardos is the only recorded individual of that name indicating a Norman origin,<sup>142</sup> but it is possible that he established an aristocratic clan like the Rogerioi, the Raoul, the Petraliphai, the Lampardai, and, possibly, the Gidoi. Kinnamos recounts that Giphardos, “experienced in many battles” (πολέμων ἔμπειρος πολλῶν), commanded troops against Cumans in 1148, and Serbs and Hungarians in 1150, and that he acted as envoy to the sultan of Ikonion in ca. 1158.<sup>143</sup> He figures in the correspondence of Georgios Tornikes as *doux* of Thrakesion. Tornikes, albeit in a topical remark, claims that the main reason for his acceptance of the diocese of Ephesos was his trust in Alexios Giphardos’s administrative and military skills.<sup>144</sup>

Overall, therefore, Byzantine historiography, confirmed by other sources, clearly indicates that a life in Romania was attractive for numerous Latins, that Romania was relatively open to them and that their presence and integration in various spheres of life were commonplace, at least in some regions and certainly in the capital.

141 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 351, n. 7 (p. 615); Zorzi (2012), p. 232. On the career of Andronikos Lampardas and his blinding and death under Andronikos, see Brand (1968), pp. 34, 45, 47, 51–52, 64; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 210, 505, 512, for his activity as a patron; MARC. CODEX 524, no. 334; Grünbart (2015), p. 169 (in comparison to other aristocratic patrons). For his seals, see Jeffreys et al. (2017), Andronikos 20118: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Andronikos/20118/>.

142 GEORGIOS TORNIKES, *Works*, p. 150, n. 1. Contrary to Tornikes’s editor Darrouzès’s opinion, there is no evidence that Giphardos was considered a barbarian in any way—the Latin connection of the family might have lain several generations in the past.

143 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 94(15)–95(21), 108(19)–109(24), 176(10–13).

144 GEORGIOS TORNIKES, *Works*, nos. 19–20, pp. 148–151.

## “Xenophobia”? Remarks about Recruitment in Government and the Army

Given the generic tendency of portraying “others” in middle Byzantine literature,<sup>1</sup> it is not surprising that histories and other literary works reflect relatively rarely on the greatly increased presence of Latins in Byzantium. Niketas Choniates, however, criticized the granting of administrative offices and positions of influence to non-Byzantines if they had not been fully “Byzantinized” and had not enjoyed the education and scholarly training that distinguished Choniates and his peers. From this perspective, Latins were less apt to hold any office in government by default, regardless of other talents or advantages they might bring to it. The employment of men from abroad on a large scale under Manouel’s rule,<sup>2</sup> criticized not only by Choniates but also by Georgios Tornikes, threatened to diminish the number of positions in the administration as well as the prestige that educated native literati defended as their prerogative.

While the stance displayed by Tornikes and Choniates may be representative of their social stratum, it is better understood as socio-political rather than “xenophobic.” It did not pertain to the origin of the criticized individuals as such, but to the absence of certain characteristics—notably high culture and education, rhetoric, proper Greek pronunciation and being well-spoken (*euglōttia*).<sup>3</sup> These qualities could in principle be acquired by anyone, regardless

1 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

2 Zorzi (2012), p. 294, with further references.

3 Zorzi (2012), pp. 295–296, p. 295: “La critica di Niceta esprime il punto di vista della classe colta bizantina, che vedeva accantonato il tradizionale principio della promozione alle più alte cariche grazie alla *παίδεια*.” See also Smythe (2010), pp. 76–77, on the “lack of education *topos*.” There is a passage in EUTHYMIOS TORNIKES, *Discours*, pp. 66(17)–67(6), that might arguably be “xenophobic” in the sense of attacking someone’s origin per se. However, Tornikes targets a Byzantine aristocrat of Turkish—not Western—origin, Ioannes Axouchos. This condemnation is also against the background of Axouchos’s attempted coup. Moreover, Tornikes brings up the possibility that Axouchos could have discarded his “ancestral badness” (*προγονική κακία*), i.e., was not condemned to act according to his “skittish Persian [Turkish] disposition” (*γαῦρον φρόνημα καὶ περσικόν*). See also Angold (2015), p. 132: “The purpose [of dwelling on Ioannes’s Turkish origins] was rhetorical.” See also Grünbart (2015), pp. 22, 182–187, 218, referring to the concept of cultural, economic, and social capital discussed by Pierre Bourdieu, among others, all three types of capital being interlinked, of course.

of origin, but in practice by only a few and often with difficulty. This created an exclusive circle to which Choniates and his peers belonged; it enhanced their social prestige, and they did not hesitate to distinguish themselves on this basis.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, origin mattered less than cultural adaptation and ties with the establishment. The Roman Empire, after all, had encompassed many peoples under imperial rule as well, but it possessed a unifying culture common to upper social strata. Educated Byzantines were conscious of this basic openness and, describing themselves as Romans, accepted it.<sup>5</sup>

That they felt a need to defend what they regarded as their prerogatives indicates that their stance was contested, that other Byzantines accepted and, in some cases, preferred Latins, other non-Byzantines, and Byzantines of an inferior level of Hellenic culture for certain positions. Military aristocrats might have been willing to welcome these competitors, and less likely to perceive them as rivals than literati such as Choniates and Tornikes.<sup>6</sup>

Choniates attacks the large share of tax revenue that went to the emperor's Latin servants and their undue influence on Manouel, the emperor having raised taxes considerably. In addition to a total lack of education (*παιδείας ἀπάσης ἐστερημένοι*), they are said to have displayed an inexpert knowledge of the Greek language and faulty pronunciation: “they spoke rather broken Greek in a barbaric fashion” (*ὑποβαρβαρίζουσιν*).<sup>7</sup> This criticism is similar to

4 Magdalino (1993b), p. 321. See also Magdalino (1984b), p. 60: “Byzantines seem to have been remarkably free of the prejudice that the social climber is permanently stamped by his origins, and is somehow being untrue to himself if he denies his background and adapts to a higher milieu.” Kekaumenos's assessment of the pre-Komnenian period similarly is not a blanket rejection of non-Byzantine newcomers. Rather, he cautions against too rapid promotions and advises on how to deal with recruits and officials from abroad, clearly concerned with defending the interests of the native aristocracy. He even praises Harald Hardrada for his loyal service: see ΚΕΚΑΥΜΕΝΟΣ, *Monitory Oration*, pp. 95–97. Shepard (1973), p. 87, comments: “Even Cecaumenos, whose military manual emphasized the need to employ native-born Byzantines in the army, concedes that high titles and ranks may justifiably be awarded to a foreigner of high birth.”

5 See Stouraitis (2014), p. 214; see also Ch. 1, pp. 27–31, 39–43; ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist. VI.11.3*, p. 193(7–16), where she describes the extension of the Roman Empire of old and compares it with the limits of the realm under Alexios's control at the time of his accession.

6 To strengthen and draw attention to their exclusive status, Byzantine literati stressed the difference between themselves and everyone who was not in possession of this status which largely comprised high literary and rhetorical education (*paideia*). This suggests that these qualities were not always as highly valued as they might have wished. Regarding their own origins in particular, which were not always so prestigious, literati often indicate insecurity as well. See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 321–322; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 292–294; Harris (2014), p. 123. See also Ch. 1, pp. 27–28, 31–32, 39–43.

7 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 204(79)–205(39).

Anna's defamatory portrayal of Ioannes Italos, whose pupils are associated with heresy and opposition to Alexios's rule.<sup>8</sup> Anna casts his provincial origin in a negative light, criticizing his "uneducated and barbarous demeanor" (ἡθὸς ἀπαιδέυτον καὶ βαρβαρικόν) and his pronunciation as revealing his barbarous character. However, this man who enjoyed the special patronage of Emperor Michael Doukas and rose to the rank of consul (ὑπάτος) of philosophers was represented differently by Byzantines who had no reason to defame him. Anna's contrary portrayal was not only due to her differing motivations but also alluded to her own Hellenic education, acquired in the capital of learned culture since her early childhood and described as flawless.<sup>9</sup>

Choniates, as one would expect of a civil aristocrat, criticizes the emperor for trusting men from abroad more than his fellow Byzantines. He complains that Manouel appointed outsiders to judicial posts for which more experienced and educated Byzantines were qualified and preferred a non-Byzantine man to a "noble Roman man of profound intellect and utmost prudence [in government affairs]" (εὐγενῆς Ῥωμαῖος ἀνὴρ, βάρπτων ὄλως εἰς νοῦν καὶ γέμων φρονήσεως) to head tax commissions, while assigning a noble literatus to the work of a secretary on such commissions. The gravest misjudgement on Manouel's part, according to Choniates, was to regard Byzantines as thieves (κλεμματισταί) and to put his trust in "avaricious barbarians and [...] ill-starred manikins" (ἐρασιχρήματοι βάρβαροι καὶ ἀνδράρια κακοδαίμονα), who kept most of the money they collected rather than delivering it to the imperial treasury.<sup>10</sup>

That, as Angold suspects, Choniates had "second- or third-generation Latins" in mind<sup>11</sup> is doubtful, because after the first generation, Byzantine historiographers no longer represent descendants of Western immigrants as Latins; at most, they mention that these individuals had a Western background, implying that they were now Byzantines.<sup>12</sup> However, in all cases where the identification of a criticized individual or group is not unequivocally possible, it ought to be taken into account that Byzantine intellectuals were plausibly flexible enough to attack almost anyone whom they intended to defame in such ways.<sup>13</sup>

8 Skoulatos (1980), no. 82, p. 119, no. 92, pp. 154–155, p. 323; Magdalino (1993b), p. 383; Gounaridis (2006b), with comprehensive bibliography; Jaworska-Wołoszyn (2014).

9 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. v.8–9, esp. v.8.3, pp. 162(68)–163(72), iv.8.6, pp. 164(31)–165(38); Skoulatos (1980), no. 90, pp. 150–153; Magdalino (2000a). On Anna's strategy of accusing Italos, his pupils and other individuals who were known as scholars, but whom she and/or Alexios opposed, of a lack of education and culture, see Skoulatos (1980), p. 323.

10 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., pp. 204(79)–205(39).

11 Angold (1997), pp. 233–235.

12 See esp. the third section of Ch. 7.

13 See also below in addition to the aforesaid example of the portrayal of Italos.

Choniates may have intended his remarks to be understood as hyperbole. He attests to the misappropriation of funds on the part of Byzantine officials in his account of the imperial coup against Venice in 1171, suggesting that men he, and perhaps Tornikes, defended could not always be trusted and that there were sound reasons for preferring alternative candidates for administrative positions. In addition, there were other substantial political reasons for emperors to appoint candidates who were not considered members of the intellectual circles inhabited by Tornikes and Choniates. Latins were especially qualified as envoys and translators and, in some cases, were more personally obliged to the emperor, being more dependent on his favor than others.<sup>14</sup> Choniates reveals that his criticism of Manouel's policy should not be understood as a general rejection of non-Byzantine or, more specifically, Latin residents. His praise of his friend Dominikos and other Venetian acquaintances, as well as comments about other residents of Constantinople hailing from the West, suggest as much.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, like Zonaras's criticism of Alexios I, Choniates may have been influenced by “republican” values that conflicted with the Komnenian practice of power, and the supposed defense of such values—a Roman rhetorical tradition going back to writers such as Cicero—appears aimed at a loss of influence of his social stratum.<sup>16</sup>

Choniates's narrative of decline also affirms that Manouel's favor bestowed upon non-Byzantines weakened the empire's defenses, deploring the fact that Byzantines had to pay military taxes to a “half-barbarian manikin” (ἀνδράριον μιξοβάρβαρον).<sup>17</sup> This is an allusion to soldiers from a Latin or other non-Byzantine background who were given the right to raise taxes from serfs (παρόικοι), although such criticism could be applied to many others.<sup>18</sup> By contrast with Choniates's standpoint, Magdalino has shown that other evidence suggests that the defense of the empire functioned relatively well under Manouel, if not under his successors.<sup>19</sup>

14 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 172(65–67). See Lilie (1984b), pp. 75–76, 88; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 221–227; Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997), p. 127. Shepard (1996), pp. 119–120, makes a similar observation regarding Alexios I.

15 See esp. Ch. 2, pp. 92, 94–95 and 99–101.

16 See IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, pp. 766(9)–767(11); Lilie (1984b), pp. 36–38; Kazhdan and Ronchey (1997), pp. 146–150; Kaldellis (2015), pp. 47–48, 69.

17 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 209(44–58).

18 Zorzi (2012), pp. 303–306.

19 Magdalino (1993b), p. 232: “Whatever the quality of the soldiers to whom Manuel allotted *pronoiai*, the defence failures that Choniates blames on them did not occur while Manuel was on the throne.”

There are other cases of interest in Choniates's history, notably the speech attributed to Andronikos Kontostephanos before the decisive battle against Hungary in 1167. In this speech—addressed to presumably uneducated soldiers!<sup>20</sup>—a concept of cultural superiority over the barbarous Hungarians is brought up. The Byzantines are said to surpass them with respect to intellect (λόγος), culture (*paideia*), and eloquence (εἰπεῖν ἔμπειροι), as well as being “not wanting in reason” (ξυνηδεῖν οὐκ ἄποροι).<sup>21</sup> Finally, the *Historia* does not hesitate in condemning the “barbarous” retinue of Andronikos I and the ignorance of the men who surrounded this emperor. In particular, he reproaches them for their lack of knowledge of the Greek language.<sup>22</sup> The implication is that Andronikos preferred such rude men to refined educated literati such as Choniates himself—the historian ceased to work in the imperial administration under this ruler whom he portrays as a tyrant.<sup>23</sup> According to Scheel, the history specifically refers to the Varangians who served as an exclusive imperial guard under Andronikos. The promotion of non-literati and the vilification of Andronikos rather than “xenophobia” may be the motivation for Choniates's negative portrayal.<sup>24</sup>

What emerges from these passages, therefore, is a certain group consciousness among educated “bureaucrats” of high social rank, who, in addition to their possession of a more elevated culture, could be identified by their dress.<sup>25</sup>

Also noteworthy is the criticism voiced by Georgios Tornikes in a letter to Ioannes Kamateros in the mid-1150s:

What is my request about then? It seems to me that the philhellene and lover of freedom shall not register the Hellene in the same category as

20 Compared to Byzantine literati.

21 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 155(72–73).

22 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 322(42–52). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 235, n. 35 (p. 661).

23 Van Dielen (1971), p. 24.

24 Scheel (2015), pp. 237–238, 862–863. See, in addition to the passages cited in this chapter, NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 137(66–88, preferment of Alexios-Bela of Hungary as heir presumptive, see also Ch. 5, pp. 184–188), 170(22–33, Manouel I's preference for a husband from abroad for his daughter Maria; on which, see also Ch. 9, pp. 291–292).

25 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 594(79–80): “Such was our [fate] and that of those who were associated with us because of their [similar] dress and their participation in the [same] intellectual culture” (Καὶ τοιαῦτα μὲν τὰ ἡμέτερα καὶ τῶν οἱ συνεκοινωνοῦν ἡμῖν σχήματος καὶ τῶν λογικῶν ἐν μεθέξει παιδεύσεων). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 305, n. 59 (p. 583). Pontani defines the group described by Choniates as “l'alta burocrazia imperiale.” Their dress indicated their rank at court. See also Angold (2005), pp. 65–66.



the barbarians nor [shall he do that with] the free man and those who are slaves by nature. I will not suffer that others, who have a barbarous tongue, that is to say also the [corresponding] way of thinking, those who are called servants of Ares [i.e. strangers to cultural refinements and *paideia*], who befriend the barbarians, prefer a barbarian even to a Hellene, give orders that one who is even above a Hellene with respect to his judgement and speech and a hero in everything, a lover of the Muses and Hermes, should come only as the second of those men. I will also dare to say the following. “Brothers in need shall be serviceable [to each other].”<sup>26</sup>

As in the case of Choniates, this criticism should be regarded as an expression of the defense of a social stratum’s status, its members’ sense of cultural superiority, and their claims to posts in the administration. There is, however, no convincing evidence for anything like “anti-Latin” or “pro-Latin” factions, the existence of which is often assumed in the scholarship, notably as the basis for the political struggles after Manouel’s death.<sup>27</sup> Both Choniates and Western sources exaggerate the emperor’s reliance on Latins. Moreover, Magdalino has shown that Manouel, rather than cultivating factions, attempted to maintain a balance, even if the military aristocracy remained the dominant group during his reign. However, Manouel also kept a balance within the military aristocracy, as Choniates attests, and no other source suggests otherwise.<sup>28</sup> This balance, while entailing great advantages overall, attracted opposition from aristocrats who wanted more than they received, especially Andronikos, the future emperor. For the civil aristocracy, it was enough to grant certain positions to Latins and other “outsiders” to draw criticism.<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, it is not possible to determine whether Tornikes’s criticism targeted a Latin, some other man from abroad, or a fellow *Rōmaios* whose (supposed) intellectual shortcomings he attacked.<sup>30</sup> The passage, like other Byzantine

26 GEORGIOS TORNIKES, Works, no. 10, p. 129(1–8): “Εἰς τί δὲ ἡ παράκλησις; Μὴ μοι τοῖς βαρβάροις τὸν Ἕλληνα μὴδὲ τοῖς φύσει δούλοις τὸν ἐλεύθερον συναπόγραφε ὁ φιλέλλην καὶ φιλελεύθερος. Οὐ δέχομαι γλώσσαν μὲν ἄλλους ἔχοντασ βαρβαρον, εἰπεῖν δὲ καὶ γνώμην, καὶ ὑπηρέτας Ἄρεος χρηματίζοντασ δὲ ἐπίπαν τοῖς βαρβάροις ᾠκείωται, ἀνὰ μέσον βαρβάρου διαστέλλειν καὶ Ἕλληνοσ, τὸν δὲ γνώμην καὶ γλώσσαν ὑπὲρ Ἕλληνα τε πάντα καὶ ἥρωσ, ἔραστήν τε Μουσῶν καὶ Ἑρμοῦ, τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων δεύτερον ἐρχεσθαι. Θαρρήσω δὲ καὶ τοῦτο εἰπεῖν. «Ἀδελφοί ἐν ἀνάγκαισ χρήσιμοι ἔστωσαν» (translation based on Kaldellis (2007a), p. 292).

27 See esp. Ch. 2, pp. 107–108, 120–122, and Ch. 3, pp. 159–164, 166. Also cf. the example of Thomas (1991), pp. 302–303 and n. 48.

28 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 217–227.

29 See Ch. 1, esp. pp. 31–32, 39–41.

30 Magdalino (1984b), pp. 65–66; Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 292–294, Zorzi (2012), p. 295.

sources, also indicates an association of high culture and education with the acquisition of freedom and nobility of spirit, whereas their absence denotes a barbarous and servile disposition. Moreover, twelfth-century Romania was still a slave-owning society and freedom had a significance in that sense as well. A free man, unlike a slave, could be assumed to be more highly educated and to speak proper Greek.<sup>31</sup>

The passage should be associated with Tornikes's eulogy written for Anna Komnene sometime after her death. Tornikes contrasts Anna's noble birth to the lowly origins of servants in the palace who were honored merely by their association with the imperial family. Some are said to have been barbarians released from captivity and slaves bought from the market—certainly a place associated with the absence of nobility.<sup>32</sup> Tornikes associates himself with Anna's nobility and high culture, not least because she was his patroness.

Another work to which these passages can be compared is the literary report concerning the revolt of Ioannes Axouchos Komnenos. Mesarites's statements about mercenaries from abroad draws a distinction between himself as a literatus of high culture and the uneducated masses. The latter, eager to plunder, had little or no respect for the sacred character or beauty of objects in the Pharos Church, which its *skeuophylax* Mesarites defended. Mesarites's criticism, however, pertains not just to mercenaries from abroad, but to Byzantine plunderers as well as monks and priests. According to his report, Mesarites saw "Iberians" (Georgians or men from the Iberian Peninsula) and "ironclad Italians" (Ἰταλοὶ σιδηρόφρακτοι) in the "cloud of bands of men" (νέφος ἐθνῶν) intent on plundering his church during the revolt. He states that this identification was based on his observation (ὄψις) of the appearance and language (διάλεκτος) of these men "who used another tongue" (ἀλλόγλωσσοι), adding that they spoke Greek "with a troubled diction, in a deranged manner, and with their tongue liable to slip" (παρακεκινημένη τῇ φράσει, παρακεκομμένη τῇ διαλέκτῳ, παραφύρῳ τῇ γλώττῃ). The contrast between Mesarites himself and the "barbarians" becomes more pronounced when he describes their furious reaction to his refusal to allow them entry into the church: he claims that while they raised his anger (*thymos*), this anger was "ruled by reason" (εὐλογος), the barbarians of course lacking reason.<sup>33</sup> After the attack of "those accursed men

31 Magdalino (1984b), pp. 64–65. For Kinnamos's association of barbarism with servility, see Ch. 12, p. 349. See also Bompaire (1985); Kazhdan (1985) for the literary association between liberty and education on the one hand and a lack of education and the status of a barbarian on the other.

32 GEORGIOS TORNIKES, Works, no. 14, p. 235(4–7).

33 See Magdalino (1993b), p. 330: "Logos was what distinguished man from dumb animals, the *aloga*."

of different origin” (κατάρατοι ἐκεῖνοι ἀλλογενεῖς) had been repelled, they, typical for barbarians, refused to back down, being “obstinate beyond measure, very persistent, unduly violent and eager” (ἐνστατικοὶ ὑπερλίαν, καρτερικοὶ τὰ πολλὰ, τοῦ δέοντος βιαίτεροι).<sup>34</sup>

“Barbarians” also sought to plunder the Elias Church,<sup>35</sup> but Mesarites denounces monks, priests, and craftsmen as well. They are said to have joined the “commoners and other-tongued men” (ἀγελαῖοι καὶ ἀλλόγλωσσοι) who sought to profit from the chaos of the insurrection to loot church treasures. Using synonyms, he emphasizes that they were not originally from the capital, and even craftsmen, who were supposed to be on Mesarites’s side, are chided for not being able to resist such temptations. He found them in the act of stealing the silver that decorated the shrine they were supposed to guard.<sup>36</sup>

The narrative gives the impression that Mesarites managed to overcome the many simultaneous dangers and challenges, thereby drawing attention to his own qualities that contrast with the barbarians’ character traits, the commoners’ greed, and the impiety of provincial monks and priests. Georgios Oinaiotes, in the speech attributed to him by Mesarites, incites rivalry between Byzantine soldiers and non-Byzantine mercenaries, based on a sense of Roman superiority and competition between various groups in the imperial army.<sup>37</sup> Like Choniates’s history and the remarks of Tornikes, Mesarites’s account expresses social identity and differentiation on the part of literati rather than an undifferentiated polarity of Byzantine vs. Latin or foreign.

34 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, pp. 33(1)–34(20).

35 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, pp. 37(17)–39(15).

36 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, p. 39(16)–40(10).

37 NIKOLAOS MESARITES, *Palace Revolt*, p. 43(2–19).



**PART 3**

*The Portrayal of External Relations with the West*





## The Importance of “Kelts” and “Sicilians” (Normans)

### *More Genericism, Introspection, Ambivalence, and Proximity*

Normans were among the most important neighbors of the Byzantine Empire in the long twelfth century. To a large extent, they marked its relationship with the West and strongly influenced the policies pursued by emperors. Almost until the end of Norman rule in the kingdom of Sicily (1194), the southern Italian Normans were the adversary that Romania fought most frequently, and, except for the 1150s, in a defensive position from the 1040s to 1071, 1081–85, 1107–8, 1147–58, and 1185–87. Wars against the principality of Antioch between the turn of the twelfth century and 1159 can be added to these military confrontations. At the same time, there was common ground and considerable cultural proximity between Byzantines and Normans. As has been shown<sup>1</sup> and as this chapter will indicate, this proximity also facilitated the integration of Normans into Byzantine society and of the Greek-speaking inhabitants of Norman southern Italy and Sicily.<sup>2</sup> Byzantine defamations of Normans are often set within a context of military conflict and must be balanced against peaceful interactions.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1 Anti-heroes of the *Alexiad*: Rompertos and Baimountos

Robert Guiscard and Bohemond of Taranto represent the main anti-heroes in contrast with the imperial hero in Anna Komnene’s *Alexiad*,<sup>4</sup> while Tancred—grandson and nephew respectively—plays a related but subordinate role.<sup>5</sup> They personify many of the challenges the ruler faced, challenges that are

1 See esp. Ch. 7.

2 For the establishment of Norman rule and the relations between Normans and the native Greek-speaking population in southern Italy and Sicily, see, for example, Schlichte (2005); Houben (2010); Plassmann (2014); Mougoyianni (2019).

3 For a general assessment, see Ciggaar (1996); Kolia-Dermitzaki (2008).

4 Lilie (1993a); Magdalino (2012), p. 228; Kaldellis (2013), p. 50.

5 On the three Norman rulers in general, see Buckler (1929), chs. 67, 69; Loud (2000); Asbridge (2000); Russo (2009). Flori (2007a) and Theotokis (2014) have been reviewed critically: see, e.g., the review of Theotokis’s study by Loud (2015). In addition, see also the following studies: Shepard (1988b); Reinsch (1989); Lilie (1987, 1993a); Todt (1999/2000);

a dominant theme of the *Alexiad*. Anna often emphasizes the troubles her father was willing to endure for the sake of the empire, which means that he lived up to the oft-mentioned imperial virtue of enduring toil for the sake of the polity.<sup>6</sup> The reason for Anna's focus on the Hautevilles are the victories that Alexios won against them, compared to the more limited achievements against the Turks in Asia Minor. Their reputation for military prowess made the victory over Norman princes a glorious accomplishment, in accordance with Byzantine military ideals. For this reason, Anna accentuates the significance of the threat posed by the Normans and concentrates her narrative on them in a way that a differently motivated account of Alexios's reign would not have done. The attention that Zonaras and Glykas devote to Robert Guiscard and Bohemond is very limited in comparison.<sup>7</sup>

All three accounts display generic tendencies.<sup>8</sup> Despite Anna's focus on Normans, everything she says about them can be traced back to the encomiastic representation of Alexios and, in connection with him, Anna's immediate family on the "good" side and of her brother and nephew on the "bad" side.<sup>9</sup> Narratives about Robert, Bohemond, and Tancred can in some cases be associated with similar ones in Latin sources, but while the *Alexiad* expresses an interest in their personalities, a main function of their portrayals is also to entertain the audience.<sup>10</sup> As for the detailed description of their prowess and physical attractiveness, while serving to make them plausible opponents, it

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Gallina (1999, 2002); Burgarella (1981, 1990, 2000); Kolia-Dermitzaki (2008); Whalen (2010); Pryor and Jeffreys (2012).

6 E.g., ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* v.5,5–6, p. 155(52–58), XII.3.4, p. 365(11–17), XII.5.1–3, pp. 370(68)–372(18), XIII.1.1, p. 384(2–5). See Stone (2000), pp. 263–265.

7 Robert Guiscard and his Normans are mentioned frequently in Books I, III, IV, V, and VI of the *Alexiad*. Bohemond becomes a crucial player from Book V and replaces his father as the main anti-hero in Books X–XIII. Tancred remains as an opponent in the crusader polities in Book XIV, but is not singled out like his uncle and grandfather. The Hautevilles can thus be said to be a major focus in nine of fifteen books. Of the nearly forty pages devoted to Alexios's reign in Büttner-Wobst's edition of Zonaras's history (pp. 730–768), however, only about four deal with the Norman invaders (pp. 734–736, 749–750), and they go completely unmentioned in the extremely brief account of the passage of the First Crusade (pp. 742–743). The same tendency applies to Michael Glykas (see Ch. 1, p. 57). In contrast, Bohemond is at the center of Anna's account of the crusade. It is noteworthy in this context that, excluding the struggle for Antioch (which did not take place in the empires' heartland), the wars against the Normans (1081–85, 1107–08) lasted for only one sixth of Alexios's long reign (1081–1118).

8 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

9 See Ch. 1, pp. 47–48.

10 On the said stories and Latin parallel sources, see Loud (1991); Frankopan (2013); Sinclair (2014).



also points to a compatibility of military ideals and standards of beauty. It may stem, as well, from Anna’s personal impression of Bohemond.<sup>11</sup>

In accordance with Alexios’s glorification as military emperor and hero, the main context in which the Hautevilles appear is a military one. The *Alexiad*’s first book describes Robert’s rise in southern Italy and his preparations for an attack against Romania. After the account of Alexios’s accession, the emperor’s preparatory measures against the Norman invasion and the duke’s crossing to the Byzantine mainland are narrated in Book III. Following books deal with the siege and battle of Dyrrachion (Book IV), the struggle against Bohemond in the Balkans during Robert’s absence (Book V), and Bohemond’s failure and return to Italy, as well as his father’s final offensive and death (Book VI). Books VII to IX can be regarded as an intermediate phase between the struggle against Guiscard and the confrontation with Bohemond. The orientation is heavily military: wars against Pechenegs, Cumans, Turks, and Serbs threaten Alexios’s rule, in addition to various conspiracies, from which the *basileus* always emerges victorious or at least undefeated. In Book X, the First Crusade arrives in Romania, with Bohemond the main participant around whom the narrative revolves. The continuing struggle against him shifts to the East in Book XI, with Antioch playing an important role, then the final confrontation takes place in Books XII to XIII, ending with Bohemond’s defeat and his submission symbolized by the treaty (*συμφωνία*) of Deabolis—more an oath than a treaty from a Byzantine standpoint.<sup>12</sup> The detailed quotation of the treaty can be regarded as the high point of the *Alexiad*.<sup>13</sup>

### 1.1 *The First Phase: Rompertos (Robert Guiscard)*

When introducing Ρομπέρτος<sup>14</sup> into her narrative—and implicitly Bohemond and Tancred—Anna characterizes him as an evil plaguing the empire at the time of Alexios’s accession, describing him as an illness, a major challenge Alexios needed to overcome. Robert’s flaws, which mark his subsequent portrayal, are enumerated from the outset: he was arrogant (*ἀλαζών*), reared by badness (*φαυλότης*), and famous for his tyrannical (i.e., also rebellious) disposition (*ἐπὶ τυραννικῇ γνώμῃ διαβόητος*), his illegitimate and unjust rule and boundless desire to accumulate power.<sup>15</sup>

11 She can hardly have known or remembered Guiscard because she was less than two years old when he died.

12 Todt (1999/2000), p. 490.

13 Kresten (1997), pp. 35–37.

14 His byname Guiscard—Γισκάρδος—appears only once in the citation of the treaty of Deabolis (1108): see ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.12.4, p. 415(41).

15 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.10.1, p. 34(7–18).

As usual for a Byzantine historiographer, she blames the situation on fellow Byzantines rather than on the strength of Romania's adversaries, and singles out Michael VII Doukas (1071–78). This emperor agreed to marry his son Konstantinos to Guiscard's daughter Olympias, renamed Helene in Romania, in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to placate Guiscard by integrating his family and retainers into the imperial hierarchy.<sup>16</sup> Anna criticizes this policy of “appeasement” of the Normans and the marriage alliance, deemed a mistake that handed Robert a tool against the empire. Additionally, Anna was later engaged to Konstantinos, which entailed the prospect that she would rule at his side one day. In hindsight, she was bound to object to this union with one of her father's most serious opponents. The *Alexiad* leaves no doubt about the position befitting Anna as a princess born in the purple and Alexios's eldest child; Helene-Olympias is implicitly accorded an inferior rank and Anna therefore implies that the marriage arrangement was insulting with respect to Konstantinos and herself. It can be associated with what went wrong in Anna's life and her corresponding regrets.<sup>17</sup>

The *Alexiad* continues to repeatedly reinforce Robert's introductory characterization, which has much in common with that of Bohemond and Tancred in later passages: he was of low origin (τὴν τύχην ἄσημος) and wicked but shrewd (τὴν ψυχὴν πανουργότατος). More positively, Robert is depicted as a brave fighter (τὴν χεῖρα γενναῖος) and assertive in pursuing his plans, but also as hungry for illegitimate power (τὴν γνώμην τυραννικός) and willing to rob great men of their rule and wealth. His appearance, which is emphasized, stands for an aptness for the wielding of power and posing a challenge to imperial rule. Anna cites reports that Robert was well shaped from head to toe, a description that corresponds to attributes of manly beauty regarded as ideal and desirable in Byzantine literature.<sup>18</sup> Reportedly, he had a red complexion (implying white

16 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 1.10.2, pp. 34(18)–35(35). On Helene-Olympias, see Von Falkenhausen (1982); Kolia-Dermizaki (1997); Tinnefeld (2004). On Michael VII's and Nikephoros III's dealings with Robert Guiscard, see Loud (2000), pp. 211–215.

17 A later passage reports that Konstantinos himself was reluctant to marry Helene-Olympias: ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 1.12.11, p. 43(71–73). Anna specifies that she, born in 1083, was acclaimed together with her fiancé Konstantinos when he was her father's co-emperor in the 1080s. She also relates that this acclamation may have foreshadowed her misfortunes, above all no doubt the birth of her brother Ioannes in 1087, which blocked her path to the throne. See Book VI.8.3, pp. 184(18)–185(28), and Book XIV.7.4, p. 451(30–40).

18 The same observation applies to the description of Konstantinos Doukas, Anna's fiancé (see ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 85, n. 148 [p. 313]). Another example is Anna's praise for the beauty of her uncle Michael Doukas, described as unique. This is part of Anna's glorification of her perfect lineage as the descendant of two renowned imperial families, the Komnenoi and the Doukai (ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* v.7.1, p. 159[71–77]). On

skin), blond hair, broad shoulders, lively, expressive eyes, and perfect proportions. To this portrayal, she adds his loud voice, comparing it to that of Achilles in the *Iliad*.<sup>19</sup>

Overall, Guiscard is thus an ambivalent figure, combining exceptional qualities recognized in Byzantine literature with terrible flaws reminiscent of barbarian topoi. This makes him a worthy opponent of her father, but also a villain whom it was just to resist. Rather than representing alterity, he is familiarized, as is Bohemond. Apart from his tyrannical mind, wickedness, and low origin, Robert is said to be in possession of the attributes of a ruler, thus representing a challenge and threat to Alexios: in accordance with his character and external appearance, he was anything but slavish, finding it unbearable to be ruled over by others. This statement, of course, is both flattering and disapproving, since submission to just and legitimate power is a virtue in Byzantine literature.<sup>20</sup>

Another characteristic introduced at this point in the *Alexiad* is cruelty, with a propensity for bloodshed, frequently in combination with robbery. This cruelty is described as the foundation of Robert's rise to power after arriving in southern Italy from Normandy.<sup>21</sup> The story revolves around a possibly fictive William *Μασκαβέλης*. Contradicting Western sources, the *Alexiad* mixes elements since Anna was more interested in conveying a certain image of Guiscard than in reconstructing events. Nevertheless, the precise number of his troops given may reflect an intention to give the story a sense of historicity to reinforce the idea that Guiscard was “most mischievous” (*κακουργότατος*). His previous characterization as a shrewd and wicked villain is exemplified by his betrayal of his presumed father-in-law William. As he was superior to Robert in terms of noble birth, wealth, and power, duplicity was the only way for him to rob this lord of his possessions. He is said to have prepared an ambush for his father-in-law. He managed to tie William up, kill one of his men with a lance, and put the rest to flight. He then imprisoned the lord in his fortress, which he had given to him as a dowry for his daughter. Pulling out all of Maskabeles's teeth and blinding him, partly to discover where his possessions were hidden,

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the relationship between power, character, and looks in Byzantine literature, see esp. Ch. 3, pp. 162–163, and below, pp. 249, 269.

19 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.10.4, pp. 35(40)–36(56).

20 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.10.4, pp. 35(40)–36(56). On Anna's evaluation of freedom and obedience, see Bompaire (1985). It is also noteworthy that she refers to his origin as “Norman” (*Νορμάνος*) rather than employing a classical expression, as usual, perhaps this is due to her previous reference to Normandy.

21 On the rise of Robert Guiscard, see Loud (2000), pp. 60–145.

partly out of lust for torture, Alexios's future opponent gave another demonstration of his cruelty (ὠμότης).<sup>22</sup>

Anna further develops the cruelty of the Hautevilles as her narrative advances, a prominent example being Robert's mutilation of Venetian prisoners during the war against Alexios. Bohemond threatened the emperor's envoy Manouel Boutoumites with the same fate. Anna, however, states that Robert's wife and son (Roger) mourned his death, suggesting the possibility of other sides to his character.<sup>23</sup>

Guiscard eventually rose to the rank of *doux* (duke) of Longibardia—Apulia and Calabria—conferred upon him by Pope Nicholas II in 1059. The *Alexiad* does not mention this because, from a Byzantine perspective, the pope had no rights over southern Italy and was not a worldly ruler.<sup>24</sup> Being “sound of mind” (φρενήρης), albeit cruel and ruthless, Robert succeeded against southern Italian magnates and citizens by employing a mix of flattery, bribery, and force. It is presented as a matter of course that Robert now aspired to conquer the imperial throne in Constantinople. Anna presents the aforesaid marriage alliance with the Doukai as integral to this aspiration. Robert, meanwhile, rose to greater heights, the purple-born Anna underlining again the contrast between his boundless ambition and his humble origins.<sup>25</sup>

A passage that follows illustrates the *Alexiad's* ambivalence toward Guiscard and Normans—and Latins in general—and that Robert's wickedness is not representative of all Normans:

Rompertos himself, as they say, being most unscrupulous, was longing painfully for the fight against the Romans and had prepared for the war long before, but was hindered by some of the most renowned men in his entourage and his own wife Gaita because he was starting an unjust war against Christians, and often he was hampered in his endeavors to start such an expedition.<sup>26</sup>

22 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.11, pp. 36(57)–39(60). See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Agnello, p. 83, n. 143 (p. 312).

23 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VI.5.8, p. 178(7–13), VI.6.3, p. 180(62–69), XI.10.7, p. 352(81–84).

24 On Anna's representation of and perspective on the papacy, see Vučetić (2012).

25 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.12.1–8, pp. 39(61)–41(29).

26 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.12.8, p. 41(28–35): “αὐτὸς μὲν, ὡς φασιν, ὁ Ῥομπέρτος ῥαδιουργότατος ὢν καὶ τὴν κατὰ Ῥωμαίων ὠδίνων μάχην καὶ πρὸ πολλοῦ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον παρασκευαζόμενος ἐκωλύετο μὲν ὡς ἀδίκων πολέμων ἄρχων καὶ κατὰ Χριστιανῶν εὐτρεπιζόμενος παρά τινων τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἐνδοξοτάτων ἀνδρῶν καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ Γαΐτης καὶ ἀνεκόπτετο πολλακίς ἐπιχειρήσας τῆς τοιαύτης ὁρμῆς.”

Needing to justify the war further, Anna explains, Robert had a monk (Raiktor) pretend to be the deposed emperor Michael VII,<sup>27</sup> presenting him to his barons (κόμητες) and his wife. The spectacle is described as yet another demonstration of the duke's talent for deception. He also arranged advantageous marriages for his daughters, thus increasing his power. Another factor of Robert's rise according to the *Alexiad* was the unwillingness or incapability of other rulers in the West to oppose him, notably the pope and the king of Ἀλαμανία (the Holy Roman Empire), who quarreled with each other. Anna does not make much of the subsequent expedient alliance between Robert and Pope Gregory VII, noting their divergent interests and the emptiness of the oaths they swore to each other. The pope is said to have promised the dignity of kingship to Robert, another testimony to his power. While Anna mistakes the meeting at Ceprano in 1080 with an earlier one at Benevento in 1073, it has nothing to do with the overall intention of the *Alexiad* to outline the political situation that favored Robert's invasion and the wickedness of both duke and pope.<sup>28</sup>

Another factor in the legitimization of Robert's invasion, which Anna only alludes to, was his association with the prophetic concept of the last, messianic emperor, also challenging Byzantine imperial ideology which incorporated a similar concept. This was therefore another element of the rivalry with Alexios, who appears to have associated himself with the role of the last emperor dying and laying down his crown in Jerusalem. The prediction of the duke's death in Jerusalem, which Anna mockingly ascribes to flatterers in his entourage, is congruent with Orderic Vitalis, who relates that, after Constantinople, Guiscard also intended to capture Jerusalem.<sup>29</sup>

Now that it was convenient, Anna implies, the pope recalled his sworn agreement with Robert, who cared only about the war against Romania. He therefore feigned ignorance of the pope's troubles, flattering him in a letter. Developing Guiscard's image as a ruthless and cruel tyrant, Anna compares him to the infamous child murderer Herod for recruiting boys and old men into his army, a claim that is probably hyperbole. His soldiers were often unsuited or untrained for warfare, according to Anna, even if Robert made efforts to train them. Anna contradicts herself concerning the ability of her father's rival by asserting his lack of wisdom in taking unqualified soldiers on

27 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 86, n. 160 (p. 313).

28 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.12.8–13.6, pp. 41(35)–45(39). On the turbulent relationship between Gregory VII and Robert Guiscard, see Loud (2000), pp. 197–210; see also the first section of Ch. 15.

29 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.6.2, p. 179(55–60); Magdalino (2005), p. 49. See Ch. 10, pp. 308–310

an expedition. Alternatively, this claim could be intended to reinforce the concept of Robert's internal contradictions, uniting folly and brilliance. William of Apulia confirms Anna's assertion that recruitment was forced. The *Alexiad* is equally accurate in pointing to the reluctance of Norman aristocrats to follow Guiscard to Romania, which was of significance in his ultimate defeat.<sup>30</sup> Anna adds to her description of Guiscard's letter to the pope, commenting that he assured the pope of protection against the German monarch during his absence through his son Roger, and his other son Βοριτύλας—an erroneous designation of his nephew, Robert of Loritello. In this she points to the mutual interest of pope and duke to avoid a German takeover of southern Italy, the pope serving as a buffer to King Henry.<sup>31</sup>

The *Alexiad* characterizes Robert's wife Gaita as an anti-heroine counterposed with Anna and her imperial mother: she took up arms to make herself a terrifying impression. Empress Eirene Doukaina likewise accompanied her husband on campaigns. Anna justifies this with the unique support her mother was able to provide,<sup>32</sup> yet implies the participation of a woman in warfare, let alone the wife of a ruler, to be an outrage. Anna may have intended her description of Gaita to reflect on Robert's revolt against the order of the world. In a later passage, Anna has Gaita, a strong woman with a loud voice like her husband, intimidate and discipline Robert's fleeing troops during the war in the Balkans, critically commenting that she was more of a second Pallas (warlike) than a second Athena (cultivated). Evidently, this description serves to display Anna's erudition and entertain her learned audience but might also indicate a concern to emphasize the role of women as leaders.<sup>33</sup>

The *Alexiad* continues to emphasize Guiscard's barbaric nature, contrasting it with her and her peers' social status and level of Hellenic education. Raoul, Guiscard's envoy to Constantinople, having seen the true Michael and his son Konstantinos, whom Alexios reinstated as co-emperor, unmasked Pseudo-Michael (Raiktor) to his duke. Raoul, fearing for his life, escaped to Bohemond (in Avlon).<sup>34</sup> Anna professes amusement at the madness and foolishness of

30 Loud (2000), pp. 217–218, 223, also pp. 234–260, on Robert's difficulties in imposing his authority over the lords of southern Italy and the erosion of ducal authority after his death.

31 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.13.10–14.3, pp. 46(83)–48(33). See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 63, n. 129. On Anna's "inaccuracies" in the portrayal of Normans, see below.

32 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.3.2–10, pp. 364(78)–368(86).

33 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.6.5, pp. 133(25)–134(32). For Anna's characterization of her mother, see Book XII.3.2–10, pp. 364(78)–368(86), esp. XII.3.8, pp. 366(49)–367(61). For her portrayal of Robert's wife, see Koutrakou (2015), pp. 50–51; for Anna's personal ambition, see Ch. 1, pp. 47–48. See also Grünbart (2016a), esp. pp. 107–112.

34 See also Ch. 7, p. 228.

Robert and Raiktor, the monk being naïve about what Robert would do with him once he fulfilled his purpose, and Robert himself harboring an illusion that the Byzantines—army and people—would tolerate a barbarian, devoid of *eugeneia* and *paideia*, as emperor.<sup>35</sup>

The strength of Guiscard’s army—150 ships and about 30,000 men—is indicated by greater numbers than in Western sources. As Loud notes, Anna accurately estimates Robert’s hopes of conquering the Byzantine capital, but she greatly exaggerates the strength of the Norman forces,<sup>36</sup> the *Alexiad* generally accentuating the challenges that its hero overcame. The contradiction with Western sources that the army and fleet set out from Brindisi rather than from Otranto, albeit a relatively minor detail, should be taken as indicative of genericism. The same can be asserted for the chronological confusions in her account of the Norman war of 1081–85. The misrepresentations have little to do with the motivation of her work and are subordinate.<sup>37</sup> Like the troops of Robert’s (indirect) successor Roger II did for the second time while Anna was working on the *Alexiad*, the Normans captured Korypho/Kerkyra (modern Corfu).<sup>38</sup> The disloyal and selfish conduct of Georgios Monomachatos, *doux* of Illyrikon, entrusted by Nikephoros Botaneiates with the defense against Robert, is emphasized. The attitude of Monomachatos—willing to throw in his lot with everyone, including Alexios, Serbs, and the “barbarous tyrant” Robert, depending on the outcome of the conflict—is implied to have been characteristic of the state of the empire, which Alexios eventually managed to vastly improve.<sup>39</sup>

What follows is another accentuation of Robert’s villainy and Alexios’s genius. Anna stresses again that the duke’s invasion was motivated by unjust “lust for power” (*φιλαρχία*), and that his claim to be defending the rights of Pseudo-Michael VII was mere pretense. She describes the disastrous state of the army in 1081, which, she implies, made Alexios’s eventual victory miraculous. In accordance with Byzantine tradition, Alexios attempted the use of diplomacy with the West to defend against the invasion, both outside and inside Robert’s dominion. A crucial aspect of this diplomatic activity was Alexios’s exploitation of divisions within the ruling stratum of Norman society, a factor that continued to be relevant under his successors.<sup>40</sup> Anna

35 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 1.15, pp. 48(48)–50(28). For the high regard for such virtues, see Ch. 1, pp. 25, 36, 40–41.

36 Loud (2000), pp. 215–217; ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 90, n. 207, p. 316.

37 Kislinger (2009b); see also below.

38 See below, p. 273.

39 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 1.16, pp. 50(29)–54(53).

40 See McQueen (1986); Shepard (1996).

mentions by name Ἑρμάνος—Herman, a half-brother of Abelard, who was a son of Count Humphrey of Calabria and Apulia, Robert Guiscard's brother.<sup>41</sup> To the disadvantage of a weak army Anna adds the simultaneous threat posed by the Turks who had advanced within sight of the capital before the emperor repelled them.<sup>42</sup>

It is fruitful to weigh the *Alexiad* against the assessment of Ioannes II and Manouel I in other sources, especially at this point in the narrative, and the implicit message seems clear: the challenges they had to overcome were nothing in comparison. Anna recounts that Robert's army was rapidly approaching while the empire was on the brink of collapse. By treasuring Alexios and implicitly scolding her brother and nephew, for failing to live up to the example set by their predecessor and for promoting themselves as greater than him in imperial panegyric, Anna draws attention to herself and her branch of the Komnenoi-Doukai. She is, in addition, making a claim to the imperial rule they represent.<sup>43</sup>

The *Alexiad* also reinforces the idea that Robert was a formidable opponent whom only the *basileus* could overcome. Guiscard was rapidly advancing with the intention of surrounding Dyrrachion with siege towers. However, a storm ensued, which resulted in the loss of many lives and provisions; the storm was deemed a divine omen. The duke, however, remained fearless (*ἀκαταπτόητος*) and unshakable, which was also the case when he learned of Bohemond's defeat against the emperor in the Balkans in 1083.<sup>44</sup> Even his formidable opponent Alexios was to be greatly relieved at the eventual news of Guiscard's death.<sup>45</sup>

Despite the setback of the storm, Robert gathered his “fearsome” and vast army at Dyrrachion. Anna claims that he had not come to plunder, unlike previous adversaries of the Byzantines, but to conquer the entire empire and lay claim to all its wealth. The display of Pseudo-Michael before the walls of the

41 On Guiscard's troubled relationship with his vassals and family members, see Loud (2000), pp. 133–134.

42 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. III.9–11.4, pp. 109(79)–116(84).

43 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. III.11.5, p. 116(85–97). On this aspect in general, see Magdalino (2000b); Stephenson (2003); also Ch. 1, pp. 47–48.

44 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. III.12, pp. 116(3)–119(4), VI.5.1–2, pp. 175(16)–176(42). Anna also cites a Latin who accompanied Robert on the campaign as her source. He is said to have been an envoy of the bishop of Bari, which suggests possible knowledge of Greek. Characteristically for the generic image of Latins, however, he remains obscure and she has nothing else to say about him.

45 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VI.6.4, p. 180(78–79).



city did not prove effective, although some believed his story.<sup>46</sup> Stressing the extreme danger and that the odds were not in Alexios's favor, Anna insists on his persuasive negotiation skills which won both Turks and Venetians to his cause. Bohemond's ship sank in a subsequent battle, though he was saved. An important victory over Robert's troops by the forces of Venetians and Byzantines did not give the duke pause in his passion for warfare. The next spring, he prepared for a confrontation on both land and sea. Within three months, a disease would decimate his army, killing 10,000 men, many of them battle-hardened warriors. With the expression “so they say” (ὡς λέγεται), Anna discreetly hints at the hyperbolic character of the figure. Robert was undeterred, and, being “most artful and inventive” (μηχανικώτατος καὶ βαθύνοος), found a way to maneuver his ships out of the nearly dry Glykys River. Alexios ascertained that the man's invasion was “irresistible” (ἀκάθεκτος).<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, Anna still stresses the assets of the Byzantines, rather than just the formidable strength of the Normans, as a positive reflection on Alexios. She praises a heroic sortie led by Georgios Palaiologos prior to Alexios's arrival at Dyrrachion. Palaiologos could not remain idle, Anna recounts, and was wounded during his courageous deeds, including the destruction of a large siege tower, which was important for capturing the city. These descriptions reflect Anna's personal acquaintance with Palaiologos and his role as a source.<sup>48</sup>

She continues to emphasize Robert's persistence, but also alludes to the disunity of the Normans and the benefit of their shared Christian faith. Robert readied a new siege tower as the emperor advanced towards Dyrrachion. More experienced advisers warned against a decisive battle with the duke, whereas younger men argued in its favor. Robert, meanwhile, assured Alexios of his goal to fight for the rights of Pseudo-Michael VII, keeping up the pretense. While he offered to accept imperial supremacy for his dominions, he made impossible demands; Anna does not deign to name these demands, thus reinforcing the idea of Robert's insolence. She has him praise Alexios's skill in a speech to his troops, but positions it as a shrewd device of the Norman: feigning reluctance to take command, he has his men beg him to do so, the skillful emperor serving as a persuasion. Anna thus alludes once more to the disunity within the

46 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.1, pp. 120(2)–122(64). Western accounts confirm the relative ineffectiveness of Pseudo-Michael VII: see Loud (2000), p. 214.

47 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.2–4.1, pp. 122(65)–126(90). William of Apulia also expresses appreciation of this feat: see Loud (2000), p. 222.

48 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* IV.4, pp. 126(90)–128(77). For Palaiologos's role as a source, see Skoulatos (1980), p. 104.

leadership of the Norman campaign.<sup>49</sup> She implies that the duke, even in his arrogance, was forced to recognize her father's exceptional qualities. Reference to God's favor is a reminder of the Christian faith of the Normans. In a later episode, the Norman army prays for divine favor during an entire night at the sanctuary of the martyr Theodoros.<sup>50</sup> To accentuate Robert's resolve, Anna relates his command to sink ships and destroy equipment as a signal that there is no going back.<sup>51</sup>

Christian faith is not the only aspect of common ground between the two sides. Many Normans were intrigued by a career in imperial service and were susceptible to lucrative Byzantine offers, even during wars against the empire. Anna describes her father's attempts to win over Normans to the imperial side and sow divisions within Robert's and Bohemond's forces as legitimate, saying that a prudent ruler and general wins in many ways.<sup>52</sup> During Guiscard's absence, Alexios convinced three leading barons to switch sides. Two of them, Raynald and William, were caught and had to fight a duel according to Norman custom. Nevertheless, both were blinded.<sup>53</sup> The *basileus's* promises and offers to Bohemond's barons were so successful that he was forced to abandon the campaign in order to procure funds to make the overdue payments.<sup>54</sup> After a victory over the Norman general Βρυέννιος,<sup>55</sup> Alexios offered the vanquished troops the opportunity to enter imperial service. It emerges, however, from Anna's account of Bohemond's campaign of 1107/8 that the opposite situation was equally possible. The *Alexiad* relates two instances in which the emperor took measures to prevent troops from communicating with and going over to the other side. It appears that Bohemond was able to influence certain soldiers, probably mercenaries. He may have been able to make use of rumors he had spread and the emperor was struggling with the disloyalty of certain aristocrats.<sup>56</sup> However, Alexios, knowing that the Norman army could be greatly

49 For the disunity on the Norman side, see below.

50 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.6.1, p. 132(79–82). For Anna's portrayal of Norman Christianity, see below.

51 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.5, pp. 129(78)–131(66).

52 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.4.3, p. 395(49–58). See also Ch. 7, pp. 207–208.

53 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.5.1, p. 153(83–91). This conspiracy is also discussed in Ch. 7, p. 208.

54 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.7.4–5, pp. 160(10)–161(28).

55 A constable Briennus, not to be confused with Anna's husband Nikephoros Bryennios: see Loud (2000), p. 219.

56 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.4.1, p. 394(31–41), XIII.8.1, p. 405(95–5), XIII.8.4, p. 406(29–35). For the Aaron conspiracy (late 1107), see Book XIII.1.5–10, pp. 385(35)–387(14); Cheynet (1990), no. 132, p. 102.

weakened by divisions among its leadership, sent forged letters to Bohemond, giving the false impression that his most senior retainers—the *κονοσταύλοι*<sup>57</sup>—were about to join the Byzantine side. He hoped that Bohemond would react furiously according to his barbarous nature, but, after a while he discerned the ruse.<sup>58</sup>

Having described Guiscard’s shrewdness elaborately, Anna emphasizes her father’s superior cleverness, yet also continues to refer to shared markers of identity. Besides reference to the Christian faith of the Normans, Anna also has praise for Ἀμικέτης (Ami of Giovinazzo), describing him as a distinguished leader, brave and noble in his deeds and mind (τῶν ἐπιφανῶν, γενναῖος καὶ χεῖρα καὶ γνῶμην), another recognition of Latin military prowess.<sup>59</sup>

Book IV also emphasizes Alexios’s personal bravery, perhaps in order to deflect attention from his loss of a battle against Guiscard, who, in one instance, is described in terms of a superhuman being, another implied excuse for Alexios’s setbacks against him. Anna mentions many noble and virtuous Byzantines who perished in this battle. The *basileus* resisted bravely until the unavoidable defeat forced him to flee. A heroic combat with lances against three Normans, all described as valiant by Anna—Petros Aliphas,<sup>60</sup> Ami, and a man of their equal—preceded his escape. The frequent mention of fighting with lance and horse is a recognition of Western cavalry, but was practiced also in Byzantium. Anna indicates that the army, which was in a disastrous state, was no match for Norman cavalry in open battle.<sup>61</sup> Alexios’s heroic escape is described in detail. Robert captured the imperial tent and, in his “immoderate arrogance” (ὑπέρογκον φρόνημα), was intent on the capture of the emperor. However, Alexios was saved by his excellent horse and, more importantly, divine intervention. He finally managed to kill Robert’s second in command, believing him to be the duke himself. Anna then informs her audience that she has understated Alexios’s heroic accomplishments because she is his daughter. While denying rhetorical embellishment, she utilizes rhetoric to great

57 Originating from the Latin *comes stabuli*: see Trapp et al. (2001), sub *κομηστάβουλος*.

58 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.4.3–9, pp. 395(49)–397(40), XIII.8.6, pp. 406(53)–407(61). On Alexios’s imperial representation and strategically applied generosity, see Shepard (1996).

59 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 155, n. 60. The significance of Bohemond’s byname *Σανίσκος*, mentioned here, is unclear.

60 Later in Alexios’s service: see Ch. 7, p. 226.

61 See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.5.5, p. 155(54–56), stating that Alexios learned as much from his defeats as his victories. See also Book V.6.2, p. 158(25–39), where Alexios is said to have instructed his archers to shoot the horses of the Normans rather than the Normans themselves, thus making the cavalry far less effective.

effect.<sup>62</sup> Anna also depicts the young Alexios in a fight in similarly heroic fashion against the forces of Bohemond. The emperor is not blamed for his initial defeats,<sup>63</sup> but rather is said to have learned from them.<sup>64</sup>

Guiscard's angry reaction to Alexios's escape is described as characteristic of his temperament: even if fearless, he was full of anger and possessed a murderous impulse. Anna recounts, in an entertaining fashion, how the envoy who informed the duke of the *basileus's* escape managed to placate his anger by stressing its miraculous nature. Like Robert, Alexios remains undefeated, both in spirit and body, as Anna announces the next stage of the struggle between the two.<sup>65</sup>

The capture of the imperial tent, a major victory trophy for the duke which Anna mentions again, has high symbolic value but is accompanied by ample mitigating circumstances. Anna does not minimize the magnitude of the Byzantine defeat, which induced the remaining garrison of Dyrrachion to open the gates to the victor. This acknowledgement allows Anna to emphasize that her father's bearing and deeds throughout were as great as the battle was disastrous, implying that it would have broken lesser men. Alexios is presented as being as experienced and shrewd a general as Robert, although superior in being still a youth whereas the duke was a mature man—Anna thus makes use of the age difference between the two, Alexios being only the same age as Bohemond. With the imperial treasury emptied, the next step was to procure funds for the continued defense against the Normans, which leads Anna to justify Alexios's confiscation of church treasures.<sup>66</sup>

The prudent Alexios was assembling a new army, but simultaneously continued efforts to cause trouble for Guiscard in Italy, successfully persuading the German king Henry to invade Longibardia. Accordingly, a speech is attributed to Robert in which he explains his intention to re-establish order in Italy, leaving Bohemond in charge in the Balkans. The speech stresses Alexios's strength and admonishes Bohemond to proceed rapidly against him before he can recover from his defeat. While subsequently things would go well for

62 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.6–8.1, pp. 131(67)–139(91). On the similarity of epic elements in the *Alexiad* and other works of the same period, Digenes Akrites in particular, see Magdalino (1993a).

63 The blame, instead, is put on the mismanagement of Alexios's predecessors, the desolate state of the Byzantine army, and the formidable strength of the Normans.

64 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.4.3–8, pp. 149(48)–153(68). See also Loud (2000), p. 219, who observes that Alexios indeed learned from defeats and adapted his approach to the war against the Normans.

65 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.8.2–4, pp. 139(91)–140(33).

66 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.1–2, pp. 141(2)–146(58).

Robert in Italy—Henry retreated when he heard of Alexios’s defeat<sup>67</sup>—his son suffered major setbacks in the Balkans, with Alexios gaining the upper hand. Characteristically, Robert was grievously shocked by the news, but quickly recovered and planned his next invasion, which he conducted with the same vigor as he had the previous one.<sup>68</sup>

The subsequent death of Robert Guiscard is an occasion for Anna to summarize and confirm the ambivalence of her portrayal of the Normans. Anna recounts that omens foretold his demise and that Robert, sick with a fever, recognized them. Alluding to her medical knowledge, Anna speculates about Robert’s illness, but declares ignorance of its exact nature. Anna also comments on astrology, critically alluding to her nephew Manouel.<sup>69</sup> In her final portrait of Robert Guiscard, Anna reinforces the magnitude of the challenge he posed. The Hautevilles are represented as perhaps the greatest trouble Alexios had to deal with and a far greater challenge than anything Ioannes and Manouel had to face.<sup>70</sup> The final description commends Robert as an excellent ruler: affable, witty in his speeches, adroit, strong, tall, mindful of the customs of his people, worthy of rule, and honorable to his retainers, with a dense beard and noble features revealing intelligence. The mention of a beard is symbolic of masculinity and power in a Byzantine perspective, and may reflect an effort on Guiscard’s part to conform to Byzantine standards.<sup>71</sup> He also receives recognition for his bravery, military prowess, and an inner steadiness that made him especially hard to fight, since defeats strengthened his resolve. In many aspects, this description mirrors that of Alexios. However, like a merchant he was greedy for gold and possessions, and extremely keen on acquiring glory. For these faults, he drew much criticism from everyone (πολλὴν τὴν μέμψιν πάντων ἐπεσπάσατο), implying his own people as well.<sup>72</sup> Anna again suggests that not all Normans were alike, that many disagreed with Guiscard’s actions.<sup>73</sup>

It is likely that Anna used this occasion to respond to criticisms that may have been voiced against the young emperor Manouel concerning his reaction to the Norman invasion. At any rate, the *Alexiad* refers to critics who argued that Alexios should have delayed a major military confrontation and censures

67 For a discussion of Anna’s take on Henry’s role, see Ch. 15, pp. 409–410.

68 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. v.3–4.1, pp. 146(59)–149(52).

69 For an overview of astrology in Byzantium, see Magdalino (2021).

70 See above, pp. 245–246.

71 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Agnello, p. 149, n. 107 (p. 354); Rodriguez Suarez (2014), pp. 249–250.

72 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. vi.6–7.5, pp. 179(41)–182(54). For a discussion of the contempt expressed for trade and merchants in Byzantine historiography, see esp. Ch. 2, pp. 76–77.

73 See above, p. 250.

them as good-for-nothings and bitter fault-finders, citing Robert's great military skills and his inner steadfastness: "it was not easy to prevail against him, but exceedingly difficult, for the man rather seemed [to become] more confident [than less confident] in his defeats."<sup>74</sup>

### 1.2 *The Long Struggle against Baïmountos (Bohemond) and Tangre (Tancred)*

Like his father, Βαϊμόντος, or Bohemond of Taranto, receives an immediate characterization when he is introduced, one that will be reinforced throughout the long narrative of his interaction with Byzantium. As in the case of Robert of Loritello, Anna contradicts the nature of the kinship between him and Guiscard established by Western sources: Bohemond was Guiscard's eldest son, Roger a younger one. This is significant because Bohemond and Guiscard are crucial for the *Alexiad* less for their own sake than for the function they fulfill with respect to Alexios. The exact kinship, like many other things unrelated to Anna's agenda, was of little importance.<sup>75</sup> Anna emphasizes the similarity between father and son, characterized by the same daring, strength, courage, and untamable temperament. She portrays them unflatteringly as a perfect team—like caterpillars and locusts—in their invasion of Romania.<sup>76</sup>

The *Alexiad* frequently accentuates these attributes, but adds new aspects. A lover of warfare, risks, and danger like his father, it was impossible to discourage the brave and passionate Bohemond. The strength of Norman cavalry is also associated with this characterization,<sup>77</sup> as is Bohemond's commander

74 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. VI.7.6–7, pp. 182(54)–183(77); see VI.7.7, p. 183(75–77): “καὶ γὰρ οὐ τῶν ῥαδίως, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν λίαν δυσκόλως καταγωνιζομένων ἦν ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐνταῖς ἡτταῖς μᾶλλον θαρραλεώτερος φαινόμενος.”

75 See Ch. 1, p. 47 and n. 167. Other contemporary historiographers, for whom Anna's alleged research restrictions cannot be assumed, display similar characteristics, as shown throughout the present study. See also ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.8.2, p. 378(56–60), where she explicitly declares not to know how exactly Tancred was related to Bohemond, which might suggest that it was perfectly acceptable to be ignorant about this matter, and hence that it was unimportant, at least in the context of historiography or literature. The same probably goes for the claim that Bohemond died six months after his return to southern Italy (see Book XIV.1.1, p. 424[20–22], and ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 475, n. 4; Flori (2007a), pp. 287–289), for instance, and the question of the place from which Bohemond's army and fleet departed in 1107 (ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 425, n. 113, p. 427, n. 120, referring to ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.8.7, p. 380[28–35], XII.9.2, p. 381[69–70]).

76 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. I.14.4, p. 48(34–47). See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 63, n. 130.

77 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.4.1–3, pp. 149(50)–150(5), V.6.2, p. 158(25–39), V.6.4, pp. 158(52)–159(54).

Bryennios, a “noble and brave man” (γενναῖος ἀνὴρ).<sup>78</sup> Alexios eventually found ways to effectively combat the Norman cavalry. The *basileus's* adversary had weaknesses that could hinder him, particularly his arrogance. The Normans, strong and greatly disciplined opponents, could still be defeated with courage and strategy.<sup>79</sup>

In order to maintain the image of Bohemond as her father's main challenger, Anna not only employs hyperbole when describing his qualities and the danger represented by him, as she does in the case of Guiscard, but presents him as more important than other leaders of the First Crusade. This rhetoric entails apparent contradictions that need to be deciphered. Anna states that the arrival of Hugh of Vermandois was only a prelude to that of Bohemond, of whom she gives the impression of having landed in Romania with an innumerable army (στράτευμα ἀριθμὸν ἄπαντα ὑπερβαῖνον), in order to magnify the importance of his arrival;<sup>80</sup> however, his lack of money and troops, by comparison with other leaders of the crusade, is raised, and the fact that Bohemond did not inherit Guiscard's duchy alluded to. This is in line with the *Alexiad's* claim that he was of low birth, nobility of birth being a criterion not only applied to Byzantines, but also to Westerners in contemporary Greek literature. As elsewhere, Anna neglects details that fall outside her interest, failing to mention that Bohemond did obtain a dominion to rule in 1088, which included Taranto and Bari.<sup>81</sup> His lack of means, however, supports the *Alexiad's* suggestion that Bohemond intended to use the Frankish enterprise to obtain a realm of his own, preferably Romania, but that the prescient Alexios stopped him. This prescience and perspicacity also prevented the emperor from granting Bohemond's request to be made *domestikos* of the east. The characterization of the exchanges between the two during the crusade is marked by Anna's agenda as well as by hindsight, as shown notably by Shepard.<sup>82</sup>

Anna's presentation also obscures other aspects, namely that Bohemond was more interested in cooperation with Alexios than she claims, at least until the crusaders progressed to Antioch. Instead, she chose to portray him as a

78 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.1.4, p. 170(57).

79 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* V.4.4–8, pp. 150(5)–153(68), V.6.3–4, pp. 158(39)–159(65), XIII.5.7–6.2, pp. 399(25)–401(67), XIII.8.1–5, pp. 405(95)–406(53).

80 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.8.1, pp. 303(22)–304(27).

81 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.1, p. 317(15–18), X.11.5–6, p. 319(66–70, 89–91). See Loud (2000), pp. 256–257. On the importance attached to *eugeneia* in contemporary Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 36–37.

82 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.7, pp. 319(94)–320(14). See Shepard (1988b); Lilie (2004), pp. 212–215; Pryor and Jeffreys (2012), who argue that Anna described as a mere request what in fact was Alexios granting a lordship on the Euphrates frontier to Bohemond.

villain intent on destroying her father's empire from the outset. The *Alexiad* singles out Bohemond as the leader of those inclined to use the enterprise, whose official goal was to claim Jerusalem, to inflict harm on the empire and to aim for Constantinople itself. The Norman is accused of having done so out of his old wrath against the *basileus*, using Peter the Hermit's call to liberate the Holy Sepulcher as a pretext. The implication is that he followed in the footsteps of his father whose pretext had been Pseudo-Michael. Anna also specifies that Bohemond wanted to take revenge for the defeat suffered in the vicinity of Larissa in 1083.<sup>83</sup>

Bohemond is made to play the main role in depriving Alexios of the restitution of Antioch, whereupon Anna exculpates her father, claiming that the flaws of the crusaders justified his choice not to come to the city's aid.<sup>84</sup> The ruses Bohemond employed to capture Antioch and to claim it for himself illustrate his deceitful character. Pretending to be a selfless adviser to his fellow crusaders, he was entrusted with the defense of the city. As examined by Lilie, Bohemond's deception of the emperor's representative Tatikios suited Anna's portrayal, although it is improbable that it happened as she narrates.<sup>85</sup> Alexios's protestation was in vain, according to Anna, because Bohemond was still the old Bohemond. In the military confrontation that followed, he even colluded with Pisan pirates.<sup>86</sup> Thus the embassy headed by Manouel Boutoumites had to concede it was impossible to come to a peace agreement with the usurper. When relating the conflict over Laodikeia, Anna repeats her assurance that her father was an excellent judge of character and had long known about Bohemond's subversive and disloyal nature and the danger he represented.<sup>87</sup> This perhaps alludes to a Byzantine opinion that the *basileus* had initially misjudged Bohemond's intentions.<sup>88</sup> This is plausible because the treaty of

83 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.10, p. 299(75–83), x.6.7, p. 301(57–63), x.9.1–2, pp. 308(59)–309(78).

84 See Ch. 10, pp. 314–315.

85 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* xi.4.2–6, pp. 331(18)–335(8), xi.6.3–4, p. 339(48–63), xi.6.9, pp. 341(28)–342(41). See Lilie (2004), p. 55; Pryor and Jeffreys (2012), pp. 74–75, observing that a break between Tatikios and Bohemond had happened long before, when the Hauteville's designs on Antioch became obvious, and that Tatikios finally returned to Alexios to report the situation. On Bohemond's acquisition of what would become the principality of Antioch, see Asbridge (2000), esp. ch. 1. On Anna's characterization of Bohemond's shrewdness, see Albu (2000); see also below, p. 269.

86 For their portrayal, see Ch. 2, pp. 103–104.

87 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* xi.9.1–2, pp. 348(23)–349(61), xi.10.6, p. 352(55–72), xi.10.8–9, pp. 352(85)–353(96), xi.11.3–7, p. 354(44–60). On the strategic importance of Laodikeia and Cilicia for controlling Antioch, see Asbridge (2000), pp. 48, 97–98.

88 Shepard (1988b).



Deabolis clearly points to the value the Byzantine government attached to Antioch. The treaty had little value in terms of realpolitik because Tancred did not recognize it, which, for the *Alexiad*, further underlines the untrustworthy, perjurious, and haughty and arrogant character of the Hauteville family.<sup>89</sup> However, while Alexios certainly did not trust Bohemond and intended to avoid a unification of his forces with those of other leaders of the crusade before their crossing to Asia Minor, it is unlikely that he distrusted the Norman to the degree claimed by Anna.<sup>90</sup>

A major contrast is drawn between Bohemond's deceitfulness, an attribute shared by his father, and Alexios's cleverness, resembling the inventiveness of Odysseus.<sup>91</sup> Unlike Bohemond, he always applies reason (*logos*), knowing how to win in various ways.<sup>92</sup> With hindsight, Anna claims that Bohemond's deceitful character was long known to Alexios at the time of his stay in Constantinople during the First Crusade, although he pretended to win the emperor's good will. Anna has Alexios test his character by serving him food which Bohemond suspects as an attempt to poison him, thus revealing his immoderate and extreme attitude in violation of Aristotle's ethics.<sup>93</sup>

Along with Bohemond's deceitful character goes perjury; his characterization as perjurer by nature (*φύσει ἐπιόρκος*) in Anna's account of the crusade is colored in hindsight by the case of Antioch. As a defense against Alexios's critics, Anna attempts to suggest a moral victory as compensation for his failure to deprive the Hautevilles of Antioch or for them to accept imperial overlordship—something both Ioannes and Manouel achieved in the 1130s and 1140s.<sup>94</sup> Anna portrays Alexios as warning Raymond of Toulouse<sup>95</sup> that Bohemond would break the agreement concerning the restitution of former Byzantine lands, having inherited his inclination toward perjury from his ancestors (*ἐκ προγόνων καθάπέρ τινα κλήρον τὴν ἐπιόρκίαν καὶ τὸν δόλον κεκτημένος*).<sup>96</sup> Tancred is likewise scolded for “injustice and oath-breaking” (*ἀδικία καὶ ὄρκων παράβασις*), although Anna generally condemns the faithlessness of the

89 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.1.1, p. 384(2–5), XIII.12, pp. 413(90)–423(52), XIV.2, pp. 427(18)–434(27).

90 Lilie (2004), pp. 37–38.

91 Macrides (2000), pp. 67–68.

92 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.4.2–3, p. 395(42–58).

93 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.1–7, pp. 317(15)–320(14). See ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 357, n. 198.

94 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.5, pp. 318(65)–319(70). See also the fourth section of Ch. 15.

95 On his role in the *Alexiad*, see the second section of Ch. 15.

96 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.9, p. 321(33–41), XI.11.6, p. 355(80–92), XI.9.1, pp. 348(23)–349(50), XIII.9.2, p. 408(9–15).

crusaders and their ingratitude for generous and readily bestowed Byzantine help in order to divert blame from Alexios. Tancred reacted to Alexios's criticism in a fashion characteristic of his people or—perhaps more fittingly—family (*genos*). Characterized as an insane barbarian beaten by God (ἐμμανής καὶ θεοπλήξ βάρβαρος) because of his rebellion against the rightful *basileus*, he was unable to bear his reprimand because he recognized the truth. Anna's implication is that this knowledge was God's punishment and that he was defeated in spiritual terms. Tancred thus resorted to boastfulness (ἀλαζονεία). The *Alexiad* stresses the emperor's angry but appropriate reaction. The description of it also reinforces the defense of Alexios and the claim that Normans and other crusading Latins were so grievous a trouble to this emperor, who was usually so calm and patient.<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, by forgiving all Christians, even Christians such as Bohemond, Alexios demonstrates his sublime imperial greatness.<sup>98</sup>

The Christian aspect to the relationship with the Normans, as is generally the case with the crusaders and Latins, is not central to Anna's agenda, but is nonetheless a very important element. The *Alexiad* notably makes a hierarchical differentiation between Norman Christians and Muslims. In descriptions of conflicts between Muslims and Latins, only the former are referred to as barbarians.<sup>99</sup> Despite the flaws of the Normans that troubled Alexios, Anna asserts that he had great respect for their Christianity. Formally, the Byzantine emperor's role was to be the protector of all Christians, even when they erred. After a victory over the Normans, Alexios placed a sign near the sanctuary of the martyr Georgios to which those who wished to serve him could go.<sup>100</sup> Anna records Robert Guiscard's burial in the monastery of the Holy Trinity at Venosa where his brothers were also buried.<sup>101</sup> Alexios is said to have made peace with Bohemond in 1108 in the name of their common Christian faith,<sup>102</sup> even offering to arrange a journey to the Holy Sepulcher for Bohemond's men.<sup>103</sup> Christian references in the treaty of Deabolis are frequent: Bohemond swears on God and his saints, Christ's passion, the Holy Cross, the Crown of Thorns, Holy Nails, and the Holy Lance. His subordinates were obliged to swear on

97 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIV.2.3–5, pp. 428(42)–429(74). On Anna's portrayal of Alexios's patience and selfless willingness to suffer—qualities worthy of an emperor—particularly regarding the crusaders, see Ch. 10, p. 313.

98 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.8.6–7, p. 407(61–85).

99 See Ch. 10, p. 317, Ch. 11, p. 336, Ch. 15, p. 442. A provision in the treaty of Deabolis is also phrased in those terms (ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.5, p. 415[54–55]).

100 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.1.4, pp. 169(49)–170(57).

101 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* VI.6.3, p. 180(69–76).

102 See above.

103 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.9.3, p. 408(24–26).

the celestial powers and under penalty of divine retribution.<sup>104</sup> Bohemond demands an oath on the gospels from Alexios’s envoys and reaffirms his own oath on the gospels and on the Holy Lance.<sup>105</sup> The treaty and the negotiations leading up to it also indicate the significance of relics to Byzantine-Western relations and their frequent employment in diplomacy.<sup>106</sup> All this is congruent with Western sources: ideas of Christian fraternity were relevant to both sides.<sup>107</sup>

An attribute that makes Bohemond and Tancred particularly dangerous is their insolent, boundless greed, which resembled Guiscard’s. This greed drew Bohemond to a place near Pelekanon where leaders of the crusade swore oaths to Alexios, for the emperor distributed precious gifts there, meant to reinforce the agreement between him and the crusaders, as well as his imperial superiority. The description of this encounter, like the story of the Latin sitting on the imperial throne,<sup>108</sup> reinforces that the Hautevilles—and Latins generally—were difficult to deal with. Tancred (Ταγγρής and Ταγγρέ later in the narrative) displayed his haughtiness by demanding that he receive the imperial tent filled with gold in exchange for his oath—the imperial tent, like the imperial throne, being a powerful symbol.<sup>109</sup>

There is an important difference between Tancred and Bohemond. After Tancred, a man of headstrong character (ἐλευθέρας γνώμης), reacted wildly to the outburst of Georgios Palaiologos, who was outraged by the young Norman’s insolence, Bohemond calmed him. Shaming his nephew, Bohemond admonished him that it was inappropriate to treat imperial relatives in such a manner. Bohemond thus appears subtler, more refined, and therefore more dangerous. Tancred’s insubordination, swearing the oath only under pressure from his uncle and the emperor, matches Robert Guiscard’s character<sup>110</sup> as described by Anna.<sup>111</sup> A similar story appears in the *Gesta Tancredi* of Ralph of Caen, perhaps due to a common source. Whatever the exact background to the story,

104 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.12.2, p. 414(13–18), XIII.12.13, p. 417(42–47), XIII.12.27, p. 422(9–16).

105 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.9.8, pp. 409(65)–410(70), XIV.1.1, p. 424(2–10).

106 Kresten (1997), pp. 46–47.

107 Neocleous (2019), pp. 16–27.

108 See Ch. 10, p. 313.

109 Anca (2010), pp. 70–71, 109–111.

110 See above, pp. 247, 248.

111 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.3.1–2, pp. 329(40)–330(69). See also Book XI.7.7, p. 345(27–44), where Tancred’s stubbornness is said to have also revealed itself during the siege of Laodikeia, in violation of the oaths sworn by the crusaders, Raymond of Toulouse attempting to persuade him to lift the siege in vain.

Anna, if not inventing the elements by herself, employed it to provide another example of Hauteville insolence.<sup>112</sup>

However, Anna does not fail to stress Tancred's strength as an opponent, again to the benefit of Alexios. In her description of the defeat that the emperor's general Aspietes suffered against him in Syria, she excuses Aspietes's selection by noting his bravery against the troops of Robert Guiscard and commenting that Tancred's army was very large (μυρίανδρος). Tancred, like Bohemond,<sup>113</sup> is deemed a master of strategy and siegecraft.<sup>114</sup> A criticism leveled against Alexios that he failed to ransom Bohemond, in Danishmendid captivity from 1100 to 1103, is passed over in silence.<sup>115</sup>

Anna indicates that Bohemond could be as headstrong as his nephew, another character trait adding to the challenge posed by him. His escape from the Holy Land to the West presents an apt illustration. In staging his own death and enduring the stench of a dead cockerel placed in his coffin, he is said to have displayed the characteristic stubbornness of barbarians. The story, deemed a unique occurrence, was no doubt meant to entertain as well. Anna, in an episode that reinforces Bohemond's defiance, has him come to shore in Korypho/Kerkyra, whereupon, recognized by his barbarian dress (ξένη και βαρβαρική στολή),<sup>116</sup> he demands to see the *doux* and instructs him to transmit a message to Alexios: you have learned how great my bravery and resistance is, now that I have been revived from death you see that I am unstoppable; Tancred will defy you from Antioch whereas I will bring war to Romania from the West and will not rest until Constantinople is captured.<sup>117</sup> The *Alexiad* thus portrays the barbarian boasting (*alazoneia*) of the emperor's most dangerous arch-enemy.<sup>118</sup>

Like his father, Bohemond lives up to his threats with enormous determination; defeats make him more resolved to fight, even when his army is decimated by divine retribution. As Anna presents it, during his final invasion of Romania, a "misfortune seemed to weigh light for a man whose presumption befitted a tyrant and who threatened to destroy every land: nevertheless, even in his

112 Lilie (2014), pp. 180–181.

113 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.9.2–3, pp. 349(46)–350(82).

114 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.2, pp. 362(84)–364(68). See Skoulatos (1980), no. 19, pp. 29–31.

115 There is a probable allusion to it in one of Theophylaktos of Achrida's letters: see Pryor and Jeffreys (2012), pp. 57–58.

116 For a brief discussion of clothing as marker of identity in Byzantium, see Ch. 1, p. 29.

117 Paraphrased.

118 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.12.1–6, p. 389(76–79). See Lilie (2014), pp. 170–172 (with further references); *ibid.*, p. 172: "What is decisive is the remark about the barbarian Bohemond's resolve to destroy the Byzantine Empire through his sheer inhuman endurance."

misfortune he persisted in contriving plans and like a wounded animal pulled himself together.”<sup>119</sup> After the general Kantakouzenos inflicts a major defeat on him and burns his ship, the “most rebellious” (τυραννικώτατος) Bohemond remains undeterred, becoming even more self-confident. The downside of this excessive self-confidence, his haughtiness, is a weakness that blinds him and leads to another defeat. An illustration of this excessiveness is Anna’s account of the capture of an enormously tall cousin of Bohemond who is presented to the emperor by a dwarfish Scythian, which greatly amuses all those present.<sup>120</sup> Being intelligent, Bohemond must ultimately recognize that every path to victory has been blocked by Alexios and that he has to make peace.<sup>121</sup> Even after this admission of defeat, negotiations over his reception by the emperor and the demands he makes show that Bohemond has not changed. First, he wants to prevent Alexios’s envoys from witnessing the desolate state of his army, plagued by hunger and disease. He demands an honorable reception and forgiveness for his misdeeds, refusing to bow to the *basileus*, who, he says, shall rise from his throne to greet him. He is also subject to the rapid mood swings typical of the Keltic people, which implies that this makes them even more difficult for Alexios to deal with.<sup>122</sup> Bohemond’s determination is reinforced by his hatred of Alexios, which even the Norman’s deceitfulness cannot mask. Anna always contrasts this with the emperor’s contrary qualities and those of Raymond of Toulouse, a true friend to Alexios.<sup>123</sup>

Nevertheless, Bohemond’s spreading of false rumors in the West about Byzantium is described as a powerful demonstration of his duplicity, but at the same time illustrates Alexios’s role as the most senior Christian ruler who is also respected among Latins. Arranging a matrimonial union with the French royal dynasty, Bohemond begins to spread lies throughout the West. Far from remaining idle, Alexios reacts to his vilification as an enemy of Christians. He frees barons from captivity in Egypt, shedding tears for their long and cruel imprisonment—thus appearing as an ideal emperor and protector of all Christians. Forgiving their perjury in failing to respect their oaths concerning

119 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.3.1, p. 389(76–79): “ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν τὸ δυστύχημα κοῦφον ἐδόκει πρὸς ἄνδρα τυραννικὸν ἔχοντα φρόνημα καὶ ἀπολεῖν ἀπειλούντα ἅπασαν γῆν· ὁμῶς μέντοι καὶ δυστυχῶν διεμηχανάτο καὶ καθάπερ θηρίον τιτρωσκόμενον πρὸς ἑαυτὸν συνεστρέφετο.”

120 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.6.5–6, pp. 401(82)–402(20). For a discussion of humor, mockery, and irony in the *Alexiad*, see Vučetić (2012); Reinsch (2013), esp. pp. 225–226 for this passage.

121 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.8.5, p. 406(35–53).

122 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.9.4–10.1, pp. 408(28)–410(78). See also Book x.11.6, p. 319(79–94) on the natural inconstancy of Latins; and Ch. 10, esp. pp. 310–311.

123 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.7.7, p. 345(27–44); see also Ch. 15, pp. 410–413.

the restitution of formerly Byzantine lands and cities, he receives them in the capital and treats them magnanimously, giving them the freedom to stay or leave as they please. While many stay, some eventually depart, determined to refute Bohemond's accusations. Their testimony effectively works against the prince of Antioch,<sup>124</sup> exposing him as a swindler (*ἀπατεῶν*) who never tells the truth, not even accidentally. Thus they put him to shame.<sup>125</sup> The story of the six Scythians (i.e., Pechenegs), "barbarian" mercenaries of Alexios captured by Normans at Otranto (*Ἰδρούς*), illustrates this as well. By spreading mendacious rumors that the Byzantine emperor is an enemy to Christians who employs pagan barbarians against the Normans, Bohemond rekindles the old wrath of the barbarians against "our people" (*ἡμεδαπὸν γένος*). With the pope's approval, the more simple-minded people now believe it just to fight Alexios. Anna's reference to the pope may reflect Pope Paschal II's neutral toleration of Bohemond's campaign. However, the pope did not endorse it, and there is evidence of disapproval of the enterprise in Western sources.<sup>126</sup>

Moreover, it is important to emphasize that Bohemond, accompanied by a Byzantine pretender, targeted Alexios and not the Byzantines more generally. Anna's generalizations, therefore, do not necessarily reflect the perceptions of her Byzantine contemporaries.<sup>127</sup>

Another feature of Alexios's anti-hero is the fear he inspires, even if its description is sometimes accompanied by a certain esteem. Against the Turks during the crusade, Bohemond is like a lion, frightening them greatly (*ἐκδειματώσων*)—here Anna quotes Homer.<sup>128</sup> Although Alexios did not achieve a complete victory over the Turks in Asia Minor, he did defeat one who frightened them so. As with the First Crusade, a divine sign announces Bohemond's invasion in 1107.<sup>129</sup> Anna describes in some detail fearsome Norman siege engines that impress the Byzantines and appreciates the artful

124 Anna never uses a title to designate Bohemond or Tancred as ruler of Antioch. On the title of *princeps* used by Bohemond and his successors, see Asbridge (2000), pp. 129–133, 137. It represented a form of defiance and assertion of independence, particularly with respect to Byzantium.

125 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.1, pp. 359(2)–361(83). For the story of Alexios's liberation of crusaders from their Egyptian captivity, see also Ch. 10, p. 319.

126 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.8.4–5, pp. 379(74)–380(11). For a discussion of this, see Rowe (1966/67); Frankopan (2012), p. 189; Neocleous (2019), pp. 41–45. For Bohemond's propaganda campaign against Alexios, see also Russo (2005).

127 Neocleous (2019), pp. 38–43.

128 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.3.5, p. 331(92–10).

129 A comet. See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XII.4.1–2, pp. 368(87)–369(16). For the First Crusade (locusts), see Ch. 10, p. 310, for the significance of Byzantine and Western beliefs in prophetic predictions and omens, see Ch. 1, pp. 32–33.

construction of a particularly high siege tower. The Norman fleet crossing from southern Italy is also deemed terrible to behold. When Bohemond’s arrival is announced to the emperor, all others present are paralyzed by fear. He is an extremely destructive “rebel” (τύραννος) against imperial authority and has a vast army in train.<sup>130</sup> Apart from one contingent accompanying Bohemond,<sup>131</sup> every Norman army is vast in the *Alexiad*.

Bohemond’s final portrait and the extensive quotation of the treaty of Deabolis confirm the importance in the *Alexiad* of the confrontation between the Hautevilles and the *basileus*. Among the non-Byzantines, no protagonist receives as much attention as Bohemond. Anna’s appraisal emphasizes that he was without comparison, Hellene or barbarian, during that time in Romania. Extremely tall, strong, and well proportioned, he conformed to the famous canon of Polykleitos—as Alexios and Eirene did. The *Alexiad* thus pursues the literary strategy of the handsome villain.<sup>132</sup> Anna notes his pale skin, white-reddish face—clean-shaven smoother than marble—blond hair, cut short unlike that of other barbarians,<sup>133</sup> blue eyes revealing dignity (ἐμβριθεία) and spirit (*thymos*), and free breathing. Venetians insulted Bohemond’s beard, Anna claims, but Normans were usually clean-shaven. Perhaps it was meant in a mocking sense as an allusion to beardlessness. Two flaws spoiled his otherwise perfect appearance. The first was a slight stoop, Anna suspecting that this was a malformation from birth, although it may as well be an allusion to Bohemond’s character flaws. The second flaw, more serious, was his fearsome appearance, including his excessively loud laughter, thus revealing his wild and cruel side. Anna, in short, gives the impression that nearly everything about the man was intense, strong, and extreme, the good and the bad. With respect to his inner qualities, he conforms to anything but the *topoi* associated with barbarians: enormously shrewd, flexible, and intelligent, he was a masterful debater. A crucial final sentence of this portrayal sums up what the *Alexiad* has to convey about Bohemond: “Being so and so great, he could only be bested by

130 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XII.9.1, p. 381(48–65): portrayal of Bohemond’s fleet; XII.9.2–3, pp. 381(65)–382(88): Bohemond’s ability as a destructive besieger, his impressive ships; XII.9.7, p. 383(26–41): Bohemond’s arrival terrifies; XIII.2.3, pp. 388(52)–389(64): frightening effect of the Norman siege engines; XIII.3.1, pp. 389(76)–390(88): description of siege engines; XIII.3.9–10, pp. 392(70)–393(92): Norman talent for constructing a high siege tower.

131 See above, p. 261.

132 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* III.3.1–4, pp. 93(85)–95(46); Hatzaki (2009), pp. 16–17, 41–42, 53, 58.

133 A reference to Norman hairstyles: see ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 459, n. 136.

the emperor in terms of success, eloquence and all other advantages bestowed by nature.”<sup>134</sup>

Although the description of Bohemond’s appearance corresponds to literary models familiar to Anna, perhaps admiration inspired her portrayal, not just of Bohemond, whom she may have met, but of his father Guiscard, and contributed to her focus on these two men as her father’s main adversaries.

Bohemond’s submission to Alexios through the treaty of Deabolis marks the provisional end of the long struggle between Alexios and the Hauteville family after twenty-seven years. It heralds the restoration of imperial order and the end of the Hauteville rebellion. Although Bohemond is credited with having a conscience that plagued him after his defeat for having violated the oath he had sworn to Alexios, Anna claims that he remained incorrigible. Probably in order to give her husband additional credit, she ascribes to him the merit of finally convincing the Norman duke to agree to the imperial demands.<sup>135</sup> Anna’s description of this victory implies criticism of Ioannes II and Manouel I for being unable to prevent Roger II of Sicily from becoming king, invading Romania, and sacking several important Byzantine cities.<sup>136</sup> There is agreement in the scholarship that the citation of the treaty of Deabolis is the high point of the *Alexiad*. The text frequently insists on the sacred and unbreakable nature of the oaths sworn by Bohemond to Alexios and his designated successor Ioannes, which served to justify any punitive military action against the principality of Antioch in case of betrayal, especially to Western powers.

One provision was created with Tancred in mind. It allows Bohemond to name the man who will rule the county of Edessa in the emperor’s name and indicates a plan to give it to Tancred, inducing him to accept his uncle’s oath. In essence, it commits Bohemond to fighting Tancred if he refuses to comply with the treaty. Another provision concerns the conflict over the patriarchate of Antioch, stating that the patriarch shall be named from among the Great Church of Constantinople by the emperor.<sup>137</sup> Book XIV of the *Alexiad*

134 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.10.4–5, pp. 411(25)–412(59); see XIII.10.5, p. 412(57–59): “τοιούτος ὢν καὶ τοσοῦτος μόνῳ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι ἀλώσιμος ἦν καὶ τύχη καὶ λόγοις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως πλεονεκτήμασιν.” For the comment about Bohemond’s beard, see ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. IV.2.4, p. 123(12–16). See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 145, n. 15. See also Anca (2010), p. 168 and n. 483.

135 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.11.1–2, pp. 412(60)–413(89).

136 See below, section 2.

137 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIII.12.1, p. 414(6–13), XIII.12.11, pp. 416(9)–417(18), XIII.12.12, p. 417(23–31), XIII.12.13, pp. 417(33)–418(56), XIII.12.20, p. 420(32–39), XIII.12.25, 421(85–93). For a detailed study of the patriarchate of Antioch during the twelfth century, see Todt (1998).



reaffirms Bohemond’s integration into the imperial hierarchy by mentioning that he received money and gifts along with the title of *sebastos*.<sup>138</sup> Such integration into the imperial hierarchy had been common practice with respect to Normans since the Macedonian dynasty.<sup>139</sup>

There are elements that point to a concern to make Bohemond’s submission more acceptable to Westerners. Most of the witnesses are of Latin origin. Some elements of Western feudal law are incorporated. Besides “faithful subject” (δοῦλος πιστός), Bohemond is referred to as “liegeman” (ἀνθρωπος λίζιος), a term adopted in Romania.<sup>140</sup> There is also a provision that Bohemond’s guarantors shall try to change his mind within forty days in case of infringement. The text refers to “our language” (Latin) in relation to the formula “pagan or Christian” (παγανικαὶ ἢ χριστιανικαὶ), and the term “knights” (καβαλλάριοι), defined as “riders and heavy-armed men” (ἵππεις καὶ ὀπλίται), is accompanied by “as we usually call them.” During the First Crusade, Bohemond had sworn “the usual oath for the Latins” (ὁ τοῖς Λατίνοις συνήθης ὄρκος).<sup>141</sup> While this terminology may point to its usefulness for diplomatic purposes and a concern to make the oath more binding for the Norman side, it does not indicate that the Byzantines were profoundly influenced by Western culture.<sup>142</sup>

## 2 “Tyrants” and Kings

### 2.1 *Rogeros (Roger II): Usurper of Byzantine Rights, Symbol of Imperial Decline*

Roger II attracted the attention of Byzantine historians for a number of reasons. He became the first Norman king in southern Europe, uniting both the south of the Italian peninsula and the island of Sicily under his rule. In its establishment and representation throughout his dominion, he relied, among other things, on Byzantine traditions, as his Norman predecessors had done.

138 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIV.1.1, p. 424(2–13).

139 Ciggaar (1996), chs. 6, 8.

140 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIII.12.8, p. 416(84). According to Pryor and Jeffreys (2012), p. 62, the treaty of Deabolis documents the first known use of the Greek version. See also Ch. 1, p. 70..

141 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.11.5, pp. 318(65)–319(66), XIII.12.11, p. 417(15), XIII.12.13, p. 417(42–47), XIII.12.15, p. 418(73–74). See also Book X.7.5, p. 303(18–21).

142 See esp. Ch. 1, pp. 70–71, Ch. 7, pp. 221–222. The similarities between the terms of the treaty of Deabolis and the πρόνοια model have also been observed. See Buisson (1985), pp. 32–34 (referring to the oaths sworn during the First Crusade), pp. 71–81 (concerning the treaty of Deabolis); Asbridge (2000), p. 97; Harris (2014), p. 84.

However, his assumption of the royal title in 1130, eventually recognized by the pope and other rulers, marked a consolidation of Norman rule, something that was bound to provoke a Byzantine reaction.<sup>143</sup> This explains Roger's designation as a "tyrant"—that is, an illegitimate ruler—in Kinnamos's and Choniates's histories. Choniates also refers to him as "king" (ῥήξ), perhaps in hindsight following Byzantium's recognition of William I's royal title after the conclusion of peace in 1158.<sup>144</sup> Roger's invasion, while differing in various respects, followed the precedent established by Bohemond and Robert Guiscard.

Roger receives a first and very brief mention in Kinnamos's account of the revolt of the *kaisar* Ioannes Dalassenos Rogerios (1143). One of the supporters of Rogerios's coup was Robert, prince of Capua, who was constrained to seek refuge in Romania because "Rogerios who then tyrannized over Sikelia [...] lusted for the rule over Kapye and pressed the man hard in war." The greed for the possessions of others, including those of the Byzantines during the Second Crusade, fits the image of a tyrant.<sup>145</sup> Again, Kinnamos adopts the emperor's standpoint, Roger being once more referred to as "the tyrant of Sikelia."<sup>146</sup> Kinnamos's description of Roger's rise in southern Italy is thus not unlike Anna's portrayal of Robert Guiscard's ruthless measures to impose his will on the leading stratum of Norman society and his subjects more generally.<sup>147</sup>

The conflict over southern Italy, in which Roger played an important part, caught Kinnamos's interest due to his personal connection and the active political role the emperor Manouel, the central figure of the history, played in Italy.<sup>148</sup> While Roger is, of course, portrayed as a villain, he cannot be an unskilled one, since he was able to seriously challenge Manouel. His representation is thus not unlike that of Bohemond or Robert Guiscard in the *Alexiad*, even if they are more dominant opponents of Alexios than Roger is of Manouel: "he was in general an active and vigorous man, skilled in contriving matters and clever at setting in motion what had been settled" (δραστήριος δὲ ἄλλως καὶ ῥέκτης ἀνὴρ δεινός τε πράγματα ῥάψαι καὶ τὰ καθεστῶτα κινήσαι δεξιός). Kinnamos notes that Roger was not originally of royal rank, but "at first ranked among the counts" (ἐς κόμητας μὲν τὸ πρῶτον τελῶν), forcing the pope to

143 On Roger II, his rise and the representation of his rule, in part following Byzantine patterns, see Aubé (2001); Houben (2010).

144 Wieruszowski (1963), p. 63; Zorzi (2012), p. 112; Burgarella (2014). See also below, p. 287.

145 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 37(4–18); see p. 37(15–18): "τηνικάδε Σικελίας τυραννῶν Ῥογήριος [...] ἐπὶ τὴν Καπύης ληγευσάμενος ἀρχὴν πολὺς ἐνέκειτο τῷ ἀνδρὶ πολεμῶν."

146 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 67(11–17).

147 Gallina (1999), pp. 208–213.

148 For the representation of Manouel's Italian connections, see esp. Chs. 2 and 4.

consecrate him king. From the Byzantine imperial perspective of Kinnamos's history, however, the papal claims to southern Italy were unfounded, as was the pontiff's supposed right to consecrate rulers, and claims to lands formerly under Byzantine dominion were equally baseless: “he [the pope] affirmed that from a long time back it [Longibardia] had belonged to his own Church” (ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ αὐτοῦ φάσκων προσήκειν ἀνέκαθεν αὐτήν).<sup>149</sup>

Roger's duplicity plays a major role in the subsequent narrative, which may have served as an excuse for Emperor Manouel's termination of diplomatic negotiations with him. When Kinnamos recounts that Lothair (III), the German king, came close to defeating Roger in 1137, he implies that it was a characteristic routine for the tyrant to overcome Lothair by means of treachery. After Lothair's death, Roger also prevailed over the pope, taking him captive. Acting falsely again, the ruler humiliated himself before the pontiff, seemingly in order to obtain forgiveness for his crimes, but in truth to force his coronation by the pope: “From that time on the ruler of Longibardia is customarily titled king” (ἐξ ἐκείνου τε ῥῆξ Λογγιβαρδίας ἡγεμονεύων κεκλήσθαι εἶωθε). Kinnamos suggests that as a next step Roger intended to further consolidate his rule as king by obtaining a marriage alliance with the Komnenian dynasty. Negotiating with Ioannes II at first, then with Manouel, he received the imperial envoy Basileios Xeros in Sicily. However, “deceived by gold, he [Xeros] promised him some absurd things, chief of which was that in the future the emperor and Rogerios were to be on an equal plane of greatness” (ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνος χρυσίῳ κλαπείς παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀλλόκοτά τινα ὠμολόγει, ὧν δὴ κεφάλαιον ἦν τὸ ἐν ἴσῳ μεγαλείου βασιλέα τε τοῦ λοιποῦ καὶ Ῥογέριον ἔσεσθαι). This or a similar account, however, probably served as an imperial excuse for terminating the negotiations and was therefore welcomed by the encomiastic Kinnamos.<sup>150</sup>

Kinnamos, attempting to create a link between the termination of negotiations and the Norman attack during the Second Crusade (1147–49), identifies the matter as the principal reason for Roger's offensive. The account of this attack seems mainly concerned with Manouel's bravery and ability to handle a difficult situation rather than the Normans as such. A desire for revenge rather than the favorable opportunity presented by the crusade is said to have motivated the Norman incursion. Pillaging Corinth and Thebes as well as capturing the entire island of Kerkyra, Roger's troops acquired rich booty. Justly enraged, as Kinnamos affirms, Manouel prepared a counter-offensive. Based on the

149 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 89(9)–90(1).

150 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 90(1)–92(7). See Lilie (1984a), pp. 394–396. According to Papageorgiou (2017), pp. 258–271, Roger II's negotiations with Byzantium were also due to the success of Ioannes II's diplomacy, isolating the Sicilian kingdom in the West.

historian's representation, recapturing Kerkyra was a difficult enterprise, demanding the emperor's personal intervention. Learning of the Byzantine efforts to recapture the island, however, "Rogerios, the tyrant of Sikelia," sent another fleet in the hope of provoking them to retreat. Rather than retreat, the emperor dispatched a naval force against the Norman fleet, intensifying efforts to regain control of the island. The siege of Kerkyra's citadel is another occasion for Kinnamos to emphasize Manouel's personal bravery. The commander of the Normans is credited with paying his respects to the emperor's person.<sup>151</sup>

The subsequent narrative seems motivated by the same concerns. Kinnamos mentions that parts of the Norman fleet reached Constantinople, but plays down the significance of this event. He insinuates instead that they "shamefully departed" (*αἰσχρῶς ἐκεῖθεν ἀπηλλάγησαν*) after attempting to set fire to wharves, that many Normans were killed, and that still more perished as a result of an attack by an imperial fleet returning from Crete. The recapture of Kerkyra is linked to Manouel's plans to return other, older Norman conquests to the imperial fold. Thus Kinnamos's hero appears as a dynamic ruler, instantly turning a Norman offensive into an imperial one, which, in fact, only materialized in 1155. The final mention of Roger in Kinnamos's account reinforces the image of a tyrant. When the historian narrates that troops led by the emperor's ally Robert of Bassonville destroyed the citadel of Bari during the invasion of 1155–56, they are said to have done so "out of hatred directed toward Rogerios, because he had behaved inhumanely to them, as is customary for tyrants" (*κατὰ ἔχθος γε μὴν τὸ πρὸς Ῥογέριον ἅτε ἀπανθρώπως αὐτοῖς ὅποια τοῖς τυραννοῦσιν εἶθισται προσφερόμενον*).<sup>152</sup>

Choniates introduces Roger, referred to as "the tyrant from Sikelia," when relating the passage of the Second Crusade. He is described as a military threat emanating from the sea, a "sea monster raging against the coasts" (*ὥσπερ θῆρ ἐνάλιος, κατὰ τῶν παραθαλαττίων χωρῶν διαπράττεται*) that thoroughly plundered poorly defended Byzantine villages and harbors. The sea monster represents a beast that violates the laws of nature, like the dragon in a poem by Manganeios Prodromos and an imperial chrysobull which contain further allusions to Roger. The imagery is, of course, biblical in part.<sup>153</sup> The Sicilian

151 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 92(7–23), 96(1)–101(17).

152 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 101(5–17), 140(16–23). For the second quote, see p. 140(19–21).

153 Zorzi (2012), p. 112, with extensive bibliography. The "dragon of Sikelia" also appears in THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 30, p. 354(200). For such literary representations, see Hörnander's commentary, *ibid.*, p. 362; Magdalino (1993b), p. 51; Gallina (1999), pp. 214–215; Koutrakou (2014), pp. 41–42; Strano (2014), pp. 84–90. As noted by Strano, the imagery applied to the king and the Normans points to the notion that Roger's

trouble was an additional danger to the threat emanating from the massive armies of the crusaders, as Manouel presented it according to the *Historia*.<sup>154</sup> A maritime threat was often accompanied by nautical and marine imagery. The “tyrant of Sikelia” as sea monster artfully underlines the naval power of the Norman attackers.<sup>155</sup>

For Choniates, the Norman invasion is another occasion to criticize fellow Byzantines:

The inhabitants of the place [were responsible for Kerkyra’s effortless capture], and among them especially one who, in terms of intelligence, was simpler than a pestle: Gymnos by [his family] name. They [the Korfiots], namely, did not tolerate the oppressive and unsavory tax collector, as they used to say, nor would they have to bear his drunken behavior any longer, they made a despicable decision, contemplating open revolt.

They are also censured for stupidly trusting the cunning Norman commander—deceitfulness being a barbarian topos. According to the *Historia*, the effortless capture of Kerkyra made it much more difficult to deal with the Norman invasion. However, Choniates contrasts the behavior of the inhabitants of Kerkyra with the courage of those of Monembasia, whom he described as sound of mind and knowing the taste of freedom (ἐλευθερία)—that is, freedom from oppressive, illegitimate, and barbarian rule—although this is possibly a reference to privileges enjoyed by certain citizens. Choniates, typical for a Constantinopolitan official, associates the concept of freedom with loyalty to the imperial government. Even if he often cites the government’s flaws, he insists that defection remains an evil.<sup>156</sup> Thus the Normans accomplished nothing regarding Monembasia; Choniates’s praise mitigates his criticism

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attack was a particularly grievous assault on imperial order because a tyrant, already ruling lawlessly over southern Italy, rightfully belonging to the empire, became even more insolent by launching this attack.

154 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 61(78)–62(3).

155 For Eustathios of Thessalonike’s use of nautical and marine imagery, see Stone (2003a); for animal imagery in Choniates’s history, see Littlewood (2007).

156 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 72(85)–73(12); see pp. 72(95)–73(4): “οἱ τῆς χώρας οἰκήτορες, καὶ τούτων μάλιστα ὁ τὴν σύνεσιν ὑπέρου φιλότερος, Γυμνὸς τὴν ἐπίκλησιν. οὗτοι γὰρ βαρύν, ὡς ἔφασκον, καὶ δυσῦπιστον φορολόγον οὐ στέγοντες, μηδὲ τὰς ἐκ τούτου παροινίας ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἐνεγκεῖν ἔχοντες, βουλήν βουλευόνται πονηρὰν εἰς ἀποστασίαν ἀπιδόντες λαμπράν.” See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 169, n. 6 (pp. 569–570); Zorzi (2012), p. 130. See also Kazhdan (1985), on Byzantine concepts of freedom and slavery. On the family of the Gymnoi, see Cheynet (1990), p. 422 and n. 49, and, for Choniates’s designation of the island of Kerkyra/Korypho, Zorzi (2012), p. 128.

by serving as a reminder that virtuous courage was still present in fellow Byzantines.

The following is indicative of Choniates's genericism,<sup>157</sup> but also elements of proximity in his portrayal of Latins. The history narrates that the Norman commander pillaged Boeotia and managed to capture Thebes, yet he remains anonymous. Instead, the subject *Ῥογέριος* suggests the king's physical presence, while in reality Roger did not lead the expedition, instead entrusting it to his admiral Georgios of Antioch.<sup>158</sup> The wealth of the citizens of Thebes incited the greed of the Normans, which is described in some detail. Choniates returns to the animal theme introduced when first speaking of Roger's attack. The imagery employed, however, does not so much reflect a negative Byzantine attitude towards Normans, rather it serves to enrich a literary work with artful and learned allusions.<sup>159</sup> The conquerors took everything they could and left with hostages, including silk weavers who would now work for different masters for generations to come. The Christian religion, which Normans and Byzantines shared, however, plays a role, for the Normans are said to have forced the wealthy citizens to swear on the Bible that they had given a correct account of their wealth.<sup>160</sup>

When relating the sack of Corinth, Choniates, in a tradition going back to ancient Greek literature, assigns the role of mocking Byzantines to a Latin rather than one of their own, but he also refers to the shared faith of both sides again. The Norman commander, namely, is said to have believed he enjoyed divine favor because of his easy capture of the nearly impregnable Acrocorinth, openly mocking the Byzantine commander Chalouphes, who is derided as weak and woman-like. Choniates also notes that the conquerors robbed the relic of Theodoros Stratelates.<sup>161</sup> Apparently taunting fellow Byzantines for the amount of booty the Normans were able to take, the history describes heavily laden "pirate ships" (*νηες πειρατικαί*) as resembling simple transport ships due to their huge load. The implication of the term "pirate ships" is that the Norman attack had no just cause and amounted to piracy and robbery.<sup>162</sup>

Compared to Kinnamos, Choniates describes parts of the invasion in detail, using it to expose flaws in the imperial government and Byzantine society, as

157 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

158 Kislinger (2009a), on Georgios of Antioch; Zorzi (2012), pp. 129–130. On the goal of the expedition, see also Rhoby (2002).

159 Zorzi (2012), p. 131.

160 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 73(18)–74(49).

161 On this military saint, see Zorzi (2012), p. 134.

162 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 74(50)–76(95).

an element in his narrative of decline. This contrasts with Kinnamos's concern to display Manouel's qualities rather than the failure of Byzantine defenses.<sup>163</sup>

Once again, Choniates's representation of Manouel's reign is strongly ambivalent. Like the *basileus*, who according to the *Historia* possessed many virtues clouded by flaws, his subjects, while already spoiled, could still display exceptional qualities, and accomplish great deeds, as in the resistance of Monembasia. Choniates praises Manouel's counter-offensive and applauds the bravery of his virtuous, heroic, and daring warriors—the similarity to contemporary Western ideals of knighthood is apparent. However, Choniates credits the emperor's father, Ioannes II, with the state of the army.<sup>164</sup> Like Kinnamos, Choniates emphasizes the difficulty of the recapture of Kerkyra, perhaps inspired by an encomiastic source, as the event occurred before the historian's lifetime.<sup>165</sup>

Choniates continues the account of the recapture of Kerkyra after relating the deposition of the patriarch Kosmas,<sup>166</sup> and maintains an ambivalent attitude toward the Normans. An attempt to storm the fortress by mounting a siege ladder standing on a ship, which should be imagined more like a siege tower, is described as heroic and promising. However, the siege ladder collapsed, as also mentioned by Kinnamos.<sup>167</sup> Whether the description of Poupakes's successful attempt to escape from the Normans after the collapse of the ladder is meant to mock the enemy, as affirmed by Schmitt, is uncertain. It could also be based on a source that accentuates Poupakes's heroic deeds.<sup>168</sup> Choniates accuses the Normans of inhumanity for throwing stones and other projectiles at the Byzantine soldiers even after the collapse of the ladder. However, far from being topical at this point, he states that the Normans refrained from this inhumane behavior because “they felt regard for the noble spirit” of their adversary—a recognition of their humanity and Christianity, which goes beyond a barbarian topos and is perhaps indicative of a familiarity with and proximity to Normans around 1200, at least in the capital.<sup>169</sup>

163 See also Schmitt (1997), p. 161.

164 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 76(1)–77(29).

165 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 77(30)–79(87).

166 Chronological contradictions between Choniates and Kinnamos suggest that the precise time of the beginning of the siege was of little importance to one or both historians: see Zorzi (2012), p. 140.

167 By contrast with Kinnamos and Manganeios, who perhaps hyperbolically multiply the number, Choniates speaks of a single ladder. For a detailed discussion, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 140–141.

168 Schmitt (1997), p. 163.

169 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 82(53)–85(39); see p. 85(39): “αἰδεσθέντες τῆς γενναιότητος.”

The following narrative, while still critical, has more positive things to say about the Normans. Choniates stresses the strategic importance of Kerkyra and of its control for both the *basileus* and the kingdom of Sicily.<sup>170</sup> Deeming it sensible that Manouel persisted in his efforts to recapture the fortress, he declares that the emperor did not wish to leave the island to “a thousand robbers”. The employment of the collective term “robbers” (λησταιί) must have been well founded from the perspective of contemporary Byzantines, but also that of a historian who witnessed the high point of Latin piracy in the Aegean.<sup>171</sup> Hunger and the dwindling hope for reinforcements persuaded the Norman commander Theodoros—possibly a Greek-speaking native of southern Italy—to surrender the fortress to Manouel. The *Historia*’s designation of Theodoros as *καστελάνος* is one of the rare instances in which a Byzantine literatus borrows a Latin term.<sup>172</sup> A Christian with a peaceful character, he revealed himself as a “friend of the Romans” (φιλορώμαιος).<sup>173</sup> Kinnamos also expresses appreciation for the commander, presenting him as an admirer of the emperor. In the tradition of his predecessors, Manouel offered the defeated soldiers the choice to enter his service or depart as they pleased. Many accepted the option to remain, including the commander Theodoros.<sup>174</sup>

Having regained Kerkyra, Kinnamos recounts, Manouel, planned to carry the Byzantine offensive into Roger’s kingdom. This portrayal accords well with Manouel’s official representation as a dynamic and heroic warrior propagated by imperial media. The weather, however, prevented the Byzantine army crossing to Sicily (or Ancona in Kinnamos’s diverging account), during the attempt of which Manouel himself narrowly escaped death by drowning. The implication is that the storm served as a divine pointer indicating disapproval of the emperor’s plans.<sup>175</sup> Choniates then suggests that Manouel sent an expedition to Italy under the command of Michael Palaiologos in the spring of 1150.<sup>176</sup>

170 This is preceded by an account of the outbreak and subsequent settlement of quarrels between Venetian and other troops in the imperial army, on which see Ch. 2, pp. 86–88.

171 For the representation of (Latin) piracy in historiography, see esp. Ch. 2, pp. 126–128.

172 Zorzi (2012), p. 145.

173 For the (rare) employment of the opposite *μισορ(ρ)ώμαιος*, see below, pp. 299–300, 304, and Ch. 14, p. 375.

174 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 87(1)–88(48). On the willingness of Normans to enter imperial service, see Chs. 7 and 9, esp. pp. 207–208, 256.

175 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 88(49)–90(76). See Gregoriou-Ioannidou (2000), pp. 204–205 (rightly suspecting that it is no coincidence that Kinnamos, in his concern to underline the glory of Manouel’s reign, omits the second failure of the Byzantine army to cross over to Italy); Zorzi (2012), p. 146. For an interpretation of the passage relating the failure of the Byzantine crossing to Italy, see Lilie (1984a), pp. 408–409.

176 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 90(2)–91(28).



The historian, albeit possibly misled by the fact that Palaiologos went on a first mission in 1150, may have cared little about chronological precision in this instance. It remains a possibility that the general did recruit mercenaries in Venice in 1150 despite political tensions with the Serenissima at the time. For the purposes of his narrative, it was adequate for Choniates to insert a short description of events pertaining to the war of 1155–58 at this point because of the thematic connection. After all, these events occurred around the time of the historian’s birth and thus represented a rather remote past. In addition, a more detailed investigation of them fell outside his work’s major concerns.<sup>177</sup>

It was Roger II’s death in 1154 that provided the opportunity to attempt a Byzantine restoration in Italy.

## 2.2 *Kaiserkritik and Its Personally Inclined Counterpart in Two Differing Accounts of the Italian War (1155–58)*

Roger’s son and successor William is a more ephemeral figure in contemporary Greek historiography, probably because he did not threaten the empire to the same degree as his predecessor.<sup>178</sup> The war between him and Emperor Manouel, however, which broke out shortly after Roger II’s death,<sup>179</sup> plays a major role in Kinnamos’s account. For Kinnamos, who worked on his history in ca. 1180, the event was less distant than for Choniates in the late 1190s–1217. Motivated to cast Manouel’s reign in a favorable light, Kinnamos chose to address the Italian war of the 1150s in some detail. Since Manouel’s invasion of southern Italy was ultimately unsuccessful, he placed the blame on the emperor’s generals, while exculpating the *basileus*. The historiographer had military experience and may have accompanied the campaign as a boy, or was acquainted with men who did, and certainly had an interest in its military aspects.<sup>180</sup>

Kinnamos appears intent on demonstrating that it was not Roger II’s death that caused William to be interested in a peace agreement with Byzantium but rather the emperor’s greatness. What other sources explicate, that William’s

177 Gregoriou-Ioannidou (2000), pp. 208–211; Zorzi (2012), pp. 147–148. See also below, pp. 288–291.

178 See, for example, EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 58(5–7), who remembers Roger as the first “tyrant” of Sicily and a powerful and energetic ruler. All he has to say about William is that he was second to his father also in terms of power and the length of his reign, but that “his name is unknown to me” (οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἦκων τοῦ ὀνομάζεσθαι).

179 For the historical background, Chalandon (1907), pp. 185–254, and Lamma (1955), pp. 149–242, are still among the most extensive studies. See also Magdalino (1993b), pp. 57–63; Gregoriou-Ioannidou (2000); Lounghis (2008); Gentile Messina (2013).

180 Lounghis (2008), pp. 457–458, arguing that, for Manouel’s benefit, Kinnamos strongly understated the difficulties of a conquest of Italy or at least southern parts of the peninsula. For Kinnamos’s personal connection with the Italian war, see Ch. 7, p. 218.

concern was to stabilize his fragile hold on the Norman kingdom, may only be implied:

Gilielmos [...] was well aware of his father's many misdeeds against the Romans' realm, and recognized that he had to send envoys to the emperor to resolve their differences. [...] He promised to restore all the property and persons which, as narrated by me, Rogerios had managed to rob with ships from Euboa and Thebai in Hellas and the city of Korinthos, and agreed to serve the emperor readily in whatever he willed.<sup>181</sup>

In his concern to exculpate Manouel from blame for the failure of the campaign, Kinnamos goes on to criticize the Byzantine commander Konstantinos Angelos's leadership of the first expedition (1154). Attacking a Norman fleet of superior strength against the emperor's express orders, he was taken captive—an outcome of his “thoughtlessness” (ἀβουλία), as Kinnamos presents it.<sup>182</sup> Despite unsuccessful negotiations with Frederick Barbarossa, Manouel sent a small force under Michael Palaiologos, Ioannes Doukas, and their ally Alexander of Gravina,<sup>183</sup> an alienated former vassal of Roger II, to southern Italy. Their task was either to persuade Frederick to take up the fight against William, or to proceed without the German ruler. As Frederick did not invade the Norman kingdom, the Byzantines relied on cooperation with William's rebellious subjects, among them Robert of Bassonville, who joined the Byzantines in Viesti.<sup>184</sup>

The description of Byzantine advances is colored by Kinnamos's glorification of a brief restoration of imperial rule, but also indicates that the morale of William's subjects was not high enough to fight to the death, the rebels and Byzantine invaders profiting from the insecurity of the king's rule in the early phase of the campaign. Doukas took a fortress commanded by a certain “Italian Prountzos”: “The Romans drove the enemy within walls and fell upon the fugitives; the rest first mounted to the citadel, but as the Romans applied fire to the dwellings and plundered property in the houses, they commenced to

181 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 118(23)–119(9): “Γιλιέλμος [...] πολλά τε ξυνειδώς ἐς τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴν τῷ πατρὶ διημαρτημένα, δεῖν ἔγνω πρέσβεις ἐς βασιλέα πέμψαι οὕτω τε τὰ διάφορα λύσαι. [...] χρήματα μὲν καὶ σώματα ὅποσα Ῥογέριος Εὐβοίας τε καὶ Θηβῶν τῶν ἐν Ἑλλάδι πόλεώς τε Κορίνθου, καθάπερ μοι δεδιήγηται, ναυσὶ περιαρπασάμενος ἔτυχε, ταῦτα δὲ πάντα ἀποδοῦναι ἀπηγγέλλετο, βασιλεῖ δὲ πάντα ὅσα βουλομένῳ ἔσται ὑπηρετήσῃν ἄσμενος ὡμολόγει.”

182 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 119(9)–16), 120(11)–121(10).

183 See Ch. 7, pp. 219–220.

184 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 134(10)–137(9).

descend and hail the great emperor as their lord.”<sup>185</sup> The town of San Flaviano, not even thinking of resistance, “agreed to be subject to the emperor and do everything which the Romans desired” (δοῦλοί τε βασιλεῖ ὠμολόγουν καὶ τὰλλα ἔπραττον, ὅσα Ῥωμαίοις βουλομένοις ἦν). Rewards offered by Palaiologos and Alexander of Gravina divided the defenders of the well-fortified city of Trani in their inclinations. This division of loyalties and attitudes was characteristic of many towns dealing with Byzantine and rebel forces.<sup>186</sup> The Byzantine offers probably seemed more attractive due to the fact that William was not firmly established as a ruler and was unable to effectively punish defections. In addition, an illness and rumors of his death undermined his position during the Byzantine invasion.<sup>187</sup>

Kinnamos comments in relation to these events that “nothing is more deceitful for men than golden bait” (ρουσίνου δελέατος οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἀπατηλότερον γίνεται),<sup>188</sup> a reference to Byzantine gold playing an important role in exerting political influence in Italy. Gold divided the enemy: “It was something really worthy of wonder, to see those lately united by nature and in purpose today sundered by gold as if by a wall, feeling hatred toward one another and already divided by deeds.” Resentment against the deceased King Roger contributed to the Byzantine takeover of the city, which induced the garrison of Trani to conclude a treaty with Palaiologos. Giovinazzo (Γιβενάτζιον) followed suit. The narrative turns to “a certain Ritzardos,” i.e., Richard of Andria, a Norman count, whose cruelty is emphasized. He met with William’s chancellor (Asclettin), an administrative position for which Kinnamos uses the Latin title, commenting that a *καντζιλέριος* would be called *λογοθέτης* in Greek.<sup>189</sup> This affirmation of (rough) equivalence indicates a certain proximity between the political orders in the West and Byzantium, or a lack of interest in the specificities of Western institutions.<sup>190</sup>

185 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 137(9–15); see p. 137(11–15): “ἔνθα προσβολῆς γενομένης Ῥωμαῖοι τοὺς πολεμίους τρεψάμενοι ἐντὸς τειχέων συνέπεσον φεύγουσιν, οἱ δὲ πρῶτον μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκρόπολιν ἀνεχώρουν, ὡς δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι πύρ ταῖς οἰκοδομαῖς ἤδη ἐνήκαν τὰ τε οἴκοι διήρπαζον, ἐπικαταβαίνειν τε ἤρξαντο καὶ κύριον σφίσι βασιλέα μέγαν ἀναβοᾶν.”

186 Gallina (1999), pp. 219–220. Magdalino (1993b), p. 60, notes that Byzantine rule (prior to the fall of Bari in 1071) is likely to have been remembered as comparatively non-oppressive.

187 Houben (2010), p. 171.

188 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 137(9)–139(22).

189 Choniates does the same with respect to Christian of Mainz, chancellor of Frederick I: see Ch. 12, p. 343.

190 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 139(22)–141(14); see p. 140(3–6): “ἦν τε πρᾶγμα πολλοῦ γε ὄντως θαύματος ἄξιον ὄραν, τοὺς ἔναγχος καὶ φύσει καὶ γνώμαις συμβαίνοντας σήμερον ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τειχισμάτι τῷ χρυσοῦ διειργμένους, ἐχθρὰ φρονούντας ἀλλήλοισι καὶ διεστηκότας ἤδη τοῖς ἔργοις.”

Stressing the enemy's depravity and superior numbers, Kinnamos underlines the justice of the imperial cause and praises the Byzantine troops and Doukas. Doukas's praise may be based on the reports of witnesses or served to avoid the impression that Manouel was foolish in his selection of generals. This impression was difficult to avoid because Kinnamos used the incompetence of the generals as an argument to implicitly exculpate the emperor for the expedition's failure. Having joined with Richard of Andria, the chancellor established a sizeable army of 2,000 knights and "extremely numerous" (μύριος) infantry to recapture Trani without resistance, according to Kinnamos who seeks to create the impression that the odds overwhelmingly favored William. Ioannes Doukas rushed to the aid of the garrison and won a battle against some of the chancellor's forces. He then engaged a larger army under Richard, who won the day thanks to superior cavalry, Kinnamos relates, "possessed by great anger and not capable of making any pretense of military science" (πολλῶ ἐχόμενος θυμῶ, οὐδὲ ὄσον τακτικῆς τι μεταποιήσασθαι ἀνασχόμενος). The statement, perhaps based on the account of eyewitnesses, also includes the topos of a mindless, foolhardy barbarian general. In a change of fortune, the count of Andria was killed at Trani in a skirmish, a priest driving a dagger through his belly. Richard thus "furnished an example of his own form of cruelty to the captive wretch" (παρέθετο ὑπόδειγμα καθ' ἑαυτοῦ τοῦτον δὴ τὸν τῆς ἀπανθρωπίας τρόπον παρεσχηκότι τῷ κακοδαίμονι). Kinnamos does not decry this priest for the spilling of blood, something that is deemed unacceptable in Byzantine literature, appearing instead to imply that a fighting priest was not an outrage in this instance because he was "a wretch" (i.e., an unworthy clergyman). Thus the rebels and the Byzantines took over Andria by treaty and returned to Bari with booty.<sup>191</sup>

Kinnamos continues to insist on Richard of Andria's depravity but recognizes "Kastros," the commander of a well-fortified city, which the Byzantines were unable to capture, as "a distinguished man." His portrayal of the enemy is thus not uniformly vilifying. Small Byzantine successes followed. Additionally, envoys sent by "the archpriest of Rome, whom Latins customarily title pope" (ὁ Ῥώμης ἀρχιερεὺς, δὲν πάπαν Λατίνοις ὀνομάζειν ἔθος ἐστίν)<sup>192</sup> offered assistance against William. Manouel sent fresh Byzantine, Alan, and French forces to Italy under the command of two Byzantine generals and Alexander of Gravina.<sup>193</sup>

191 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 141(14)–145(3). For Byzantine characterizations of the participation of clergymen in warfare, see Ch. 10, p. 320.

192 For a brief discussion of Byzantine attitudes toward Latin Christianity, see esp. Ch. 1, pp. 65–68.

193 For the portrayal of Alexander, see the second section of Ch. 7.

When mentioning the Byzantine siege of Bosco, a fortress formerly subject to Richard of Andria, Kinnamos seizes another opportunity to scold the count and the Norman adversaries in general: “out of excessive, conceited ostentation, all kinds of beasts were reared in individual habitats, to afford him easy hunting whenever he wished” (ὑπὸ τῆς ἄγαν φιλοτιμίας καὶ ζώων γένη παντοδαπὰ ἔτρεφεν ἰδιαζούσαις ἐν διατριβαίς, ἄπονόν τινα θήραν ὅποτε βούλοιτο αὐτῷ παρεχόμενα).<sup>194</sup>

The differentiated portrayal of the war, with Westerners on both sides, shows that a Latin origin was not the main basis for Kinnamos’s vilification but rather whether the group or individual in question was opposed or helpful to the imperial cause.

Kinnamos’s celebration of imperial restoration in Italy, displaying his characteristic interest in military matters, also strongly points to similarities between Byzantine and Norman military prowess. The Norman forces, now mobilizing, were heavily armored and included cavalry with long lances, a main military asset of Latins in general and Normans in particular. Thus “panic seized the Romans’ army.” Doukas receives credit for maintaining discipline and for the Norman defeat that followed, but so does the “valor” (ἀρετή) of the Byzantine soldiery, who inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Bosco was finally captured and sacked, the Byzantines returning to Bari with booty. There followed the capture of Montepeloso, Alexander of Conversano’s Gravina, as well as other towns and fortresses. Kinnamos indicates imperial restoration and retribution for the Norman conquest of southern Italy in the 1040s–70s: “Then the Italians [Normans and other adversaries] observed the Romans, whose warfare they had not experienced for an immense period of time, driving away and carrying off absolutely all their property.”<sup>195</sup> The “immense period of time” is between the capture of Bari in 1071, signaling the end of Byzantine rule, and the campaign of 1155–56, Manouel’s attempt at restoration.

Kinnamos seeks to attribute the ultimate failure of the campaign to the death of the general Palaiologos, whom he exempts from blame, citing his military prowess and intelligence. Doukas took up sole command of the campaign. After the capture of Polymilion, its defender “Flamingos” (Flameng) retreated to Taranto. He then approached with a superior army, but a Byzantine force demonstrated its valor against his army before retreating. The main army under Doukas managed to drive Flameng back and took Massafra and rich

194 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 145(4)–148(15).

195 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 148(15)–151(5); see p. 151(2–5): “καὶ εἶδον τότε Ἴταλοι Ῥωμαίους, ὧν ἀπέιρου ἤδη τοῦ χρόνου πολεμούντων σφίσιν οὐκ ἐπειράθησαν, πάντα καθάπαξ τὰ αὐτῶν ἄγοντάς τε καὶ φέροντας.”

booty. Kinnamos again refers to Latin institutions,<sup>196</sup> his use of Greek terms indicating similar Byzantine concepts, or perhaps a lack of interest in specific differences. He explains that the citizens of Taranto, berating the general Flameng, “gathered by guild and neighborhoods” (κατὰ συστήματα καὶ δήμους συνεχόμενοι).<sup>197</sup> They “imputed this charge to him, that he had made his own cowardice the cause of the Romans’ courage” (ἔγκλημα αὐτῷ ἐπιφέροντες, ὅτι δὴ δειλίαν τὴν αὐτοῦ Ῥωμαίοις παρρησίας πεποιήται ὕλην). Unable to endure this reprimand, which impugned his honor as a general, a concept that made sense to Byzantines,<sup>198</sup> Flameng assembled a new force. Characteristic for an account of a barbarian, or at least a non-Byzantine, this resolve is said to have turned to cowardice, as “he waited for the Romans’ army. But just as it came within his view, smitten immediately by fear, he did not even recollect his courage.”<sup>199</sup>

Kinnamos’s narrative of the siege of Monopoli lives up to his comparatively detailed description of the Italian campaign and its general orientation. Along with a summary of events, it also comprises the feats of a Byzantine soldier called Hikanatos. Under pressure, the citizens of Monopoli appealed to Flameng, who promised to come to their aid with a sizeable army. Flameng’s portrayal resembles topical descriptions of the emperor’s adversaries in imperial panegyric: “Fear, however, kept him within, and he fell into limitless cowardice when he considered with whom he would fight and against whom the battle would be.”<sup>200</sup> Failing to appear, Flameng induced some Monopolitans to negotiate the surrender of the town to Manouel. Kinnamos attributes any willingness to negotiate to the Romans’ “zeal” (*thymos*) rather than to Doukas’s leadership. He criticizes the general and sides with the Monopolitans, preparing his audience for Manouel’s further exculpation: “gripped by excessive conceit and arrogance, he [Doukas] declared that the matter had already been decided by battle.” Finally, he relented when the citizens pressed him even more and “begged forgiveness for their error.”<sup>201</sup>

196 See above, p. 281, for his explanation of the title of chancellor.

197 On the term σύστημα in the sense of guild or professional association, see Trapp et al. (2011), sub σύστημα (example of Ioustinianos I’s novels).

198 See above for the previous similar characterization of Norman military prowess.

199 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 151(5)–153(23); see p. 153(21–23): “τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἐξεδέχετο στρατιάν. ἀλλ’ ἄρτι τε εἰς ὄψιν ἦλθεν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτίκα δειλία βληθεὶς οὐκέτι ἀλαχῆς ἐμέμνητο.”

200 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 154(1)–156(12); see p. 156(10–12): “δέος δὲ αὐτὸν ἔνδον ἐπέειχε, καὶ εἰς δειλίαν ὄρον οὐκ ἔχουσαν ἐπιπτε λογιζόμενος τίσι μαχεῖται καὶ πρὸς τίνας αὐτῷ ὁ πόλεμος ἔσται.”

201 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 156(12)–157(16); see p. 157(12–16): “ὁ δὲ Δούκας τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἀναινομένῳ ἔφακει, θρύψει τε καὶ ὑπεροψία πολλῇ ἐχόμενος μάχη τὸ πρᾶγμα ἤδη κριθῆναι ἰσχυρίζετο. ἐγκλιμένων δὲ ἔτι μάλλον εἰς τοῦτο τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ ἐπιχωρεῖν αὐτοῖς τὴν ἀμαρτὰδα ἰκετεύοντων, ὅψε παρακληθεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν εἰσήγε τὸ στρατεύμα.”

The subsequent narrative mocks the enemy, and especially Flameng, for their shameful escape after the fall of Monopoli, but it also displays nostalgia for Byzantine rule, influenced by hindsight. Giving an account of Doukas's letter to Manouel written after this victory, Kinnamos relates that, with William preparing his forces, the general saw the risk of failure. The Byzantine commander requested more troops and naval reinforcements. Kinnamos returns to the campaign in Apulia. Having acquired Ostuni by treaty, Doukas arrived at the walls of Brindisi (Βρεντέσιον). By quoting its ancient name (Τεμέση), Kinnamos alludes to his learning, but in addition invokes the transformative power of time. Just as Roman or Byzantine rule was gradually replaced by Norman and Muslim rule in southern Italy, so too toponyms changed, becoming “absolutely dissimilar or [at least] somewhat different” (ἢ παντάπασιν ἀνόμοια ἢ ὀλίγω διαφέροντα).<sup>202</sup>

An illustrative anecdote is yet another indication of the compatibility of Western ideals with Byzantine concepts of military prowess, at least in a literary context. Thomas, apparently a Latin from Antioch who had long ago entered imperial service, challenged one of Brindisi's finest warriors, a certain Ἐγγέλυς, to a duel. The two men, being “so armed and so valiant” (οὕτω μὲν πάνοπλοι οὕτω δὲ γενναῖοι), fought with lance and horses.<sup>203</sup> While the Byzantines were still enjoying successes and low morale among the citizens of Brindisi caused them to open the gates, reports reached Doukas that William's army was approaching. The general forged an imperial letter saying that reinforcements would arrive shortly and thus led his men to a victory. The Byzantines also managed to cause the outer wall of Brindisi's citadel to collapse, a process that Kinnamos expounds in some detail. The “barbarians” reacted by retreating to the inner wall. Meanwhile, the emperor dispatched reinforcements to Apulia.<sup>204</sup>

Kinnamos continues to focus on Manouel's exculpation for the failure of the campaign. Moreover, he blames mistakes made by the Byzantine generals, not the strength of the Normans. Alexios, son of Anna Komnene and then *megas doux* (high admiral), is blamed for ignoring the emperor's command to recruit additional forces before going to Apulia with his fleet and army. Kinnamos argues that the Byzantine commanders made the mistake of allowing William's army to seize the initiative and to force them into a fatal confrontation. However, desertions greatly weakened the army; notable among the deserters were Norman contingents who, seeing the tide turning, went over

202 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 157(16)–159(13).

203 On jousts and joust-like events in Romania during the long twelfth century, see Schreiner (1996); Maguire and Jones (2002).

204 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 159(13)–164(23).

to William. It is possible to deduce that the reliance on mercenaries proved a fatal error. Even if the remaining Byzantine forces fought courageously against the vastly superior Norman army, as Kinnamos relates, they ultimately had to give in. He harshly criticizes the Byzantine commanders for preferring foolhardiness to a prudent retreat and fight at sea which would have promised more success. Moreover, he again regrets the commander Alexios's disregard of the emperor's order to recruit additional forces.<sup>205</sup>

While Kinnamos is thus very attentive indeed to the causes of Byzantine failure, his portrayal of Italy and its inhabitants remains generic. As he narrates how the war continued, the emperor sending the *prōtostratōr* Alexios Axouchos to Ancona to raise new forces, he describes the political alliances in Italy after the Byzantine defeat at Brindisi. His description omits Pope Hadrian IV's recognition of William as king after the Byzantine defeat, but does mention that Hadrian had to contend with opposition in Rome because of his support for William.<sup>206</sup>

Behind his quotation of the pope's words lies an awareness that the statement is hyperbole in a political context rather than an antagonism precluding common ground between Rome and Constantinople. The pope is said to have declared that "there was nothing in common between the newer Rome [Constantinople] and the elder, since they had anciently been broken apart."<sup>207</sup> As correspondence between popes, emperors, and patriarchs during the long twelfth century indicates, the tone between Romania and the papacy could be more diplomatic and ambivalent. An arrangement could be found, even if difficult disagreements remained.<sup>208</sup>

Kinnamos continues to cast the final phase of the Italian war in a favorable light for Manouel. He credits the second expedition under Axouchos with considerable success, stating that over 300 cities joined the imperial cause, with San Germano notable among them. This statement likely refers only to formal declarations on the part of Italian cities. Again, he blames Manouel's agents and generals, notably Alexios Komnenos and Doukas, for accepting Norman demands too eagerly. Choniates, however, is more sober in his assessment,

205 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 165(1)–169(19).

206 Kinnamos's brief description of events in Rome is deemed historically plausible in the scholarship: see Gentile Messina (2013), p. 486.

207 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 169(20)–171(19); see p. 171(6–8): "μηδὲν μετὸν εἶναι [...] Ῥώμῃ τῇ νεωτέρᾳ πρὸς τὴν πρεσβυτέραν, πάλαι ἀπορραγισίων."

208 See, e.g., Grumel and Darrouzès (1989), no. 951, pp. 419–420, no. 1183, p. 595; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1320a, pp. 195–196, no. 1348, p. 206, no. 1606a, p. 306; Gastgeber (2008). See also Ch. 1, pp. 65–68.



noting that the main purpose of the expedition was to force the Norman king to make peace. Another factor was that Manouel still hoped to renew the German alliance and to continue the war with Barbarossa's support.<sup>209</sup> Kinnamos then has Manouel reprimand his captive generals in a letter.<sup>210</sup> Kinnamos brings up a second message, this time addressed to William. The tone is defiant and, appropriately for an encomiastic history, reflects Byzantine ecumenism: “The Romans will not abstain from warring in Italy until they shall place the whole island under our power, as it formerly was” (Ῥωμαῖοι γὰρ οὐ πρότερον Ἰταλίᾳ πολεμοῦντες ἀφέξονται, πρὶν ἂν αὐτὴν τε καὶ τὴν νῆσον πάσαν ὑπὸ παλάμη τῆ ἡμῶν ὥσπερ καὶ πρότερον ἦδη ποιήσωνται). The reply appears to attribute imperial Byzantine concepts to Normans, but it could be based on an attempt by the Norman embassy to please the *basileus* during peace negotiations. Manouel is celebrated for his successes in Italy, deemed a sufficient punishment for Norman errors, including Roger II's expedition against Romania: “You have won renown which belonged to none other save your imperial power since Ioustinianos, the former emperor of the Romans” (κλέος ἀνεδήσω, ὃ μετὰ Ἰουστινιανὸν ἀρχαῖον Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορα οὐδενὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὑπήρξεν, ὅτι μὴ τῷ κράτει τῷ σῷ). Thus William is said to have promised the release of prisoners and sued for a peace treaty.<sup>211</sup>

Kinnamos's account of the peace agreement with the Normans is close to imperial propaganda. In exchange for peace and imperial recognition of the Norman ruler's royal status, Manouel obtained a promise of support in the West, which meant a guarantee on William's part that he would favor, or at least not disturb, Byzantium's interests in central and northern Italy.<sup>212</sup> Prior to Manouel's recognition, according to Kinnamos, William was not king, thus reaffirming the Byzantine stance that Norman rule in southern Italy was illegitimate. It appears, however, that official recognition was downplayed by the imperial government, that it plausibly implied nominal imperial overlordship and amounted merely to official toleration of Norman rule—toleration that could be withdrawn at will. Indeed, Kinnamos stresses how, after the conclusion of the treaty, Manouel generously preserved his “good will” (τὸ εὐμενές)

209 See below, p. 292; also Magdalino (1993b), p. 61; Gentile Messina (2013), pp. 479–480, 488–492.

210 On the (limited) authenticity of the letters in Kinnamos's history, see Kresten (1997), pp. 39ff.

211 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 171(19)–175(15).

212 Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1420, pp. 230–231. According to Lilie (1984a), p. 444, Kinnamos's possibly casts William as a client king by implying that he agreed to provide troops for the *basileus* in Italy.

toward William, refusing to support a rebellion following the king's death (in 1166).<sup>213</sup>

In conclusion, the main focus of Kinnamos's portrayal of the Italian war appears to be Manouel's record as a ruler and his exculpation for the failure of the enterprise. His account was based on personal observation or at least on eyewitness accounts. In addition, it reflects the historian's interest in military matters and prowess as a marker of Byzantine aristocratic identity, an interest that he likely shared with the emperor and his intended audience more generally.

His portrayal is to be contrasted with Choniates's account, which is a differently motivated, more superficial or generic, and less interested perspective on the same events. Whereas other affairs concerning the West and Westerners receive a comparable treatment by both historiographers, these events are accorded merely a few remarks in Choniates's history (as opposed to half a book in Kinnamos's narrative). King William is mentioned at various points by Kinnamos, for example, but the Norman ruler remains anonymous in Choniates's *Historia*. The younger historian makes use of the war to reinforce his recurring interpretations of imperial history.<sup>214</sup>

At the beginning, Choniates relates that when Michael Palaiologos had acquired a sufficiently strong force, he sailed to Longibardia, i.e., southern Italy, to fight against the forces of the "king," i.e., William. The participation of Count Alexander of Gravina is mentioned briefly.<sup>215</sup> Choniates confirms that Byzantine gold contributed to Palaiologos's successes. Choniates then changes the subject.<sup>216</sup> The narrative continues a little later: unlike Kinnamos, Choniates claims a dissatisfaction with Palaiologos's conduct of the war and omits his death. This oversight was due more to a lack of interest than of available information, as it had little to do with the motivation for composing the *Historia*.<sup>217</sup> Perhaps influenced by encomiastic sources, and due to his lack of knowledge or interest in details of the campaign, Choniates speaks of immense naval victories against the Normans, something not even Kinnamos does.<sup>218</sup> Like the earlier historian, however, he

213 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 175(15–23). See Gentile Messina (2013), p. 485, (2014), p. 54.

214 For characterizations of Choniates's account, see Gregoriou-Ioannidou (2000), p. 201; Lounghis (2008), pp. 458–459; Zorzi (2012), p. 154.

215 For Alexander's portrayal in Byzantine historiography, see Ch. 7, pp. 218–221.

216 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 91(10–28). On the fortification of Βάρη και Αύλωνία in Asia Minor with stones brought from Bari, also mentioned in this passage, see the detailed references in Zorzi (2012), p. 149.

217 Zorzi (2012), p. 154.

218 Lounghis (2008), pp. 464–466.

stresses how the final battle against William destroyed all previous successes of the Byzantines. Manouel is said to have been greatly vexed by this defeat, without, however, giving in.<sup>219</sup>

The episode around the alleged treason of the keeper of the imperial inkstand, Theodoros Stypeiotes, is concerned with Manouel's characterization as ruler, the Italian war and alleged collusion with William serving merely as the interchangeable subject of the accusation against Stypeiotes.<sup>220</sup>

Choniates continues to engage in introspective criticism. Having recorded the Byzantine defeat at Brindisi, he chronologically misplaces the expedition under Konstantinos Angelos.<sup>221</sup> Again, this chronological detail was irrelevant to Choniates's agenda. His account seems more motivated by an interest to give an example of the emperor's astrological superstition rather than to provide information about the Italian war.<sup>222</sup> Mocking determination of the date of Konstantinos's departure by the stars, he recounts that the handsome, but not very able, general was captured immediately by Norman ships. Contrary to Kinnamos, the *Historia* underlines the enormous cost of the campaign, the stated 300 *kentēteria* of gold being a vast sum compared to other figures in contemporary sources for imperial revenue and expenditure.<sup>223</sup> Choniates's general concern is to identify symptoms of decline in Manouel's reign, particularly a tendency to waste his subjects' taxes on enterprises that flatter his vanity rather than advance Romania's interests:

Seeing [...] the difficult and inconvenient turn brought about by the wars and perceiving how the repeated abundance of expenses was devouring little by little the treasure chambers like a gangrene sickness (he had in fact spent about 300 *kentēteria* of gold), he thought it necessary to make peace with the king.<sup>224</sup>

219 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 94(9)–95(22).

220 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 112(50)–113(74).

221 Zorzi (2012), pp. 155–156.

222 On Choniates's criticism of astrological beliefs, of emperors in particular, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 156–157; Magdalino (2021). The mockery is more explicit in the a-version, as expounded by Simpson (2013), pp. 82–83. See also Ch. 5, pp. 188–189, for the example of the deciding battle against Hungary (1167).

223 Zorzi (2012), pp. 157–158.

224 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 95(23)–97(61); see pp. 96(57)–97(61): “ὁρῶν δὲ τὸν διὰ πολέμων [...] τρόπον δύσεργον καὶ ἀξύμφορον καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀναλωμάτων ἀδρὸν καὶ ἐπάλληλον ὑπειδόμενος οἶά τινα νόσον γὰγγραιναν τὰ τῶν θησαυρῶν κατὰ βραχὺ ταμεία νεμόμενον (ἐγγυς γὰρ που τριακοσίω κεντηαρίω χρυσίον ἀνάλωκε) δέον εἶναι διειρηθῆ σπείσασθαι τῷ ῥήγῃ.”

Comparing a papal embassy to an auspicious angel, Choniates states that Manouel was relieved to accept the pope's mediation. The *prōtostratōr* Alexios was dispatched to Ancona with the goal of securing favorable peace terms with the king of Sicily, as with the king's admiral, Maio.<sup>225</sup> Choniates, unlike Kinnamos, has no reason to suggest that the emperor now favored William (because of the recognition of the royal title): "To tell the truth, they did not come to a genuine agreement, but feigned the friendship of the wolf." He also criticizes Axouchos's handling of imperial funds after the peace agreement had been reached.<sup>226</sup>

Choniates's account of an alleged expedition to Constantinople before hostilities ceased again seems influenced by introspective criticism. That Maio was not in fact the commander of the fleet—it was Maio's brother Stephen—is another detail that was likely of little consequence for Choniates.<sup>227</sup> William instructed Maio, on arriving in Constantinople, to proclaim him lord and emperor of Sicily, Apulia (Ἀκυλία),<sup>228</sup> Capua, Calabria, and all regions and islands in between. At this point, Choniates seems to side with the emperor rather than to criticize him, for he says that the Norman demonstration of power in Constantinople accomplished nothing and that Manouel laughed about this boast (καύχημα) and base act of piracy. The narrative thus makes plain how meaningless and empty this gesture and William's aspirations were, and possibly alludes to frequent similar criticism of Byzantine vanity elsewhere in the history. Whether the Norman fleet reached Constantinople under William I, or only under Roger II, is a matter of scholarly debate. However, it does not affect Choniates's verdict: neither Normans nor Byzantines were able to gain the upper hand. Peace was therefore the only appropriate solution.<sup>229</sup>

In his general assessment of the war, Choniates uses Manouel's example to criticize emperors who came after him. While judging that the campaign had been useless to the Byzantines, he also raises a question: "But what could be said about one fighting and struggling so eagerly to subdue other peoples?"

225 See Zorzi (2012), pp. 158–159.

226 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 97(61)–99(21); see p. 98(95–1): "τᾶληθές εἰπεῖν, οὐ καθαρῶς ὁμονοησάντων, λυκοφιλίαν δὲ σχηματισσαμένων." See Zorzi (2012), pp. 159–160; Gentile Messina (2013), p. 473.

227 Zorzi (2012), p. 159.

228 On this form, see Zorzi (2012), p. 161.

229 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 97(61)–99(37). EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 58(18–20) also states that the fleet of William I reached Constantinople. See Niederau (1982), pp. 57–59; Gregoriou-Ioannidou (2000), pp. 211–219; Zorzi (2012), p. 161. On the Norman fleet reaching Constantinople in 1149, see also THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 30, pp. 352(120)–353(172).

The implication is that the rulers after Manouel did not just fail—they did not even try to succeed.<sup>230</sup>

### 2.3 *Differing Motivations behind the Portrayal of the Byzantine-Sicilian War*

The second William of Sicily (1166–89)<sup>231</sup> enters Greek historiography mainly because of the war against Romania he initiated, due to the instigation of Byzantine aristocrats exiled by Andronikos I. The main event in that war, narrated by Choniates<sup>232</sup> and Eustathios,<sup>233</sup> is the Sicilian capture of Thessalonike, which the city’s archbishop dedicated an entire literary work to. Choniates had his own reasons to devote attention to it.

Byzantine relations with the kingdom of Sicily under William II appear in a previous instance in the *Historia*, reflecting a generic and introspective outlook.<sup>234</sup> Manouel conducted lengthy marriage negotiations with Sicily which, had they been successful, would have united his only daughter, the purple-born Maria, and the young William. Choniates, in his usual superficial portrayal of Western affairs, does not give information on the political background, merely stating that the emperor abandoned the project after ultimately deeming the alliance to be of no use.<sup>235</sup> The passage mainly serves the *Historia*’s narrative of imperial decline, suggesting that, in his conceit and hubris, the emperor did not consider a Byzantine family for the union, but preferred to look beyond Romania. Aware that a match with a Byzantine family would have disrupted the delicate balance of the Komnenian political order, Choniates ignored this aspect in favor of *Kaiserkritik*. It is revealing that while he largely approves Manouel’s rapprochement with the West and does not criticize similar marriage alliances, he attacks this one. The fact that Choniates was from a native provincial family may have played a role in his assessment. Like comparable remarks, the criticism has more to do with social status and political power

230 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 100(40–45); see p. 100(43–45): “ἀλλὰ τί πρὸς τὸν ἡγωνισμὸν εἶπη τις ἂν καὶ οὕτω προθύμως ἡμλλημένον, ὡς εἴη παραστησάμενος τὸ ἀλλόφυλον.”

231 On William II and his reign in general, see Schlichte (2005); Lavagnini and Rognoni (2014).

232 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 296(70)–308(17), 317(4)–321(19), 356(24)–366(3).

233 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.* The capture of Thessalonike and its immediate aftermath is the predominant theme throughout Eustathios’s work: even his account of events in the rest of the empire (mainly the capital) from 1180 to 1185 (pp. 18[12]–58[3]), serves to shed light on the causes of Thessalonike’s fall.

234 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

235 For Byzantine political relations with Norman Sicily, see Magdalino (1993b), pp. 89–90, 92–94; Schlichte (2005), pp. 235–243; also Ch. 15, p. 417.

than “xenophobia.” Had a Byzantine aristocrat obtained the emperor’s daughter’s hand in marriage, numerous people in his environment would have drawn some benefit from his rise, among them certainly some literati and members of the civil aristocracy such as Choniates himself. The history might speak on their behalf.<sup>236</sup> In 1171–72, Manouel broke with Venice and Sicily to favor an unsuccessful alliance with Barbarossa. In 1175, a treaty between these common enemies of Romania was the consequence. While mentioning the treaty and indicating that it did not prevent a Byzantine rapprochement with Venice, Choniates offers no further comment, again pointing to the small importance he accords to Western affairs for their own sake.<sup>237</sup>

Several motivations and influences for Choniates’s account of Thessalonike’s fall can be inferred. His bitter remarks about Sicilians and Latins in the context of the fall of the city may reflect a positive attitude toward Eustathios, who had influenced Choniates’s education during his youth via the mediation of his older brother and teacher Michael.<sup>238</sup> The description of the conquest contrasts the savage behavior of barbarians with that of a highly cultivated archbishop and literatus who represents Choniates’s educational and social rank, as well as that of his audience—the language alone makes it apparent to whom the history is addressed. The fall of the empire’s second city was a historic event, and Choniates makes ample use of hyperbole to underline its significance. In his narrative of imperial decline, Thessalonike’s fall serves as a warning and a lesson: if the Byzantines fail to defend the empire, a repetition of the horrors described will occur—with the fall of the empire’s second city a prelude to the destruction of the first. Therefore, his condemnation of “the Latins,” which appears at first generally valid, should be balanced with this context and Choniates’s more favorable and nuanced portrayal in other instances.

Eustathios’s account has some similarities but is also characterized by unique features. First, there is the obvious historical and personal significance of the conquest. Eustathios expresses great admiration for Thessalonike’s beauty and plausibly felt that it was important to give literary expression to what he and the city had gone through.<sup>239</sup> Secondly, politics is a crucial factor. Having lived through the turbulent reign of Andronikos I, Eustathios was keen to win the favor of the new regime in Constantinople around Isaakios II. Like Isaakios, Eustathios sought to distance himself from Andronikos, to condemn

236 See Ch. 5, pp. 184–188 (example of Bela-Alexios), and Ch. 8.

237 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 170(22–33), 173(6–15).

238 Van Dieten (1971), pp. 21–22; Kaldellis (2007a), p. 321; Simpson (2013), pp. 14–15.

239 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 6(3–21).

his tyranny, and to profess his loyalty to the last legitimate emperor, Alexios II, by condemning his murder, and to associate himself with Manouel's long and comparatively stable rule. The fall of Thessalonike is blamed entirely on Andronikos, his reign of terror and the city's governor, David Komnenos.<sup>240</sup> He exempts himself from blame, stressing his personal willingness and efforts to defend the city. If criticized for inappropriate collaboration with Sicilian leaders, resulting in preferential treatment, he strongly defends himself against such charges.<sup>241</sup> This factor likely influenced his portrayal of the Sicilian conquerors in terms of otherness. Nevertheless, a more complex and ambiguous approach emerges overall.<sup>242</sup> Thirdly, the account is also introspective in offering a moral lesson to its audience.

Eustathios's portrayal of the Sicilians is largely representative of the generic portrayal of other peoples in middle Byzantine literature. In his description of the escape of Byzantine aristocrats to Sicily, victims of the emperor's rule, Eustathios disapprovingly references the Hautevilles as “tyrants” in the tradition of ancient tyrants of Sicily, such as the first and the second Dionysios of Syracuse and Phalaris of Akragas.<sup>243</sup> As observed by Schlichte regarding William II's reign, at any rate the treatment of the Sicilian kingdom's Greek-speaking population can hardly be regarded as tyrannical by the standards of the time, but he did remain an illegitimate ruler from an official Byzantine standpoint.<sup>244</sup> Roger is said to represent the first generation of these tyrants, transforming the Roman “county” (κομητᾶτον)—a reference to Sicily's former adherence to Constantinople—into a “kingdom” (ῥηγᾶτον).<sup>245</sup> In this instance, the learned Eustathios employs two words of Latin origin in a conscious decision to describe the political transformation of Sicily under Norman rule in terms closer to Western than to Byzantine concepts. Eustathios's writings, albeit still representative of genericism, demonstrate an unusual interest in

240 See, e.g., EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 30(21), 52(15–29): condemnation of Alexios II's murder; 44(12–17): denouncement of the senators who supported the goal of making Andronikos co-emperor; 10(9)–18(12): on David's selfishness and corruption through Andronikos's influence. For Eustathios's portrayal of Manouel's widow, the regent Maria-Xene, see the third section of Ch. 3; for the possible identity of David Komnenos, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 179, n. 100 (p. 640).

241 Odorico (2006), pp. 160–172; (2017), p. 497; Kaldellis (2010), p. 213. On Eustathios's conception of rhetoric, plausibility, truth, and lying, acceptable deceptions or distortions and influencing an audience, see Van den Berg (2017). See also Ch. 1, pp. 41–42.

242 Holmes (2019), p. 143.

243 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Melville Jones, pp. 191–192 (commentary).

244 Schlichte (2005), pp. 199–203.

245 Trapp et al. (2001), sub κομητᾶτον; Trapp et al. (2001), sub ῥηγᾶτον.

Western institutions, as can be seen in his discussion of Venice, which is in line with the particularly strong intellectual curiosity he exhibits in his literary works.<sup>246</sup> The first William remains obscure, Eustathios not bothering even to remember his name. William II is described as a largely unsuccessful ruler. The archbishop is perhaps referring to the king's lack of children, since he refers to the concept that a dynasty of tyrants lasts only for three generations, with William representing the third. However, William can be regarded as a very fortunate ruler, Eustathios adds, in terms of what he accomplished against Byzantium.<sup>247</sup>

The subsequent narrative continues in this introspective and generic mode. When discussing William II's motivation for attacking Romania, Eustathios raises the conflicts under Manouel, particularly the war of the 1150s. He also addresses Manouel's agreements with various rulers, including the Norman king, concerning the rule of his son Alexios, which gave them a valid argument to act against Andronikos and support a Pseudo-Alexios.<sup>248</sup> Eustathios points out that there was opposition to supporting Pseudo-Alexios, especially among better councilors of King William, including the archbishops of Palermo and Messina. The arguments that they made according to Eustathios, however, reflect a Byzantine stance: the count of Sicily was once a *doux* under the rule of the Byzantine Empire and now inappropriately strives to rule. The argument put forward by proponents of the war—Andronikos's illegitimate rule—is turned around to question the king of Sicily as a legitimate ruler because of the usurpation of the royal title.<sup>249</sup> Eustathios attests to resistance among William's subordinates to an invasion of Romania to emphasize its illegitimacy and injustice.

In hindsight, Eustathios makes plain that the Sicilian expedition ultimately failed because of hubris: the arrogance of the Sicilians is compared to that of Andronikos, whose sinfulness led to his ruin. William recruited men of various origins for his army—here Eustathios might allude to mercenaries, but also to victims of the Constantinopolitan riots of 1182. William's financial means were modest, Eustathios says; it is unclear from the archbishop's account how the expedition was financed. He suggests that heavy borrowing was the

246 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35 (generic representation of the West and Westerners in Byzantine literature), and Ch. 2, p. 102 (Venetian polity).

247 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 58(3–16). On William II's childlessness, see Schlichte (2005), pp. 266–268.

248 On this Pseudo-Alexios, see Cheynet (1990), no. 161, p. 118.

249 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 58(17)–62(28). See also Gentile Messina (2014), p. 60 and n. 46.



king’s solution and that William was over-confident in choosing only the best knights, imagining them vastly superior to Byzantine troops. The archbishop thus provides a moral lesson about hubris.<sup>250</sup>

Eustathios further distances himself from Andronikos, deeming him worse than the Sicilians, which mitigates their defamation. His emphasis on the strength of the Sicilian army is congruent with the archbishop’s narrative of divine retribution against the city of Thessalonike. Dyrrachion fell quickly because of the emperor’s and its governor’s mismanagement. Given Eustathios’s ample descriptions of Sicilian cruelty, it reflects on the image of Andronikos that the general Ioannes Branias preferred capture by the enemy to facing Andronikos after his defeat. Following the fall of Dyrrachion, no obstacle stood in the army’s way to Thessalonike. Considering the incompetence of the city’s governor David, according to Eustathios, many already knew that a Sicilian conquest was imminent. The lesson drawn from the fate of the city’s inhabitants is that God punished them for their sins, but was benevolent in not driving them into the grip of Andronikos—a statement confirming that the Sicilian invaders were less terrible.<sup>251</sup>

The account of the progression of the siege is full of criticism directed against fellow Byzantines: the shortcomings of *doux* David, his friends, the general Choumnos—who made a fatal error according to Sicilian reports Eustathios received after the fall of the city—and the rich citizens who abandoned their fellow Byzantines.<sup>252</sup> He mocks David through the Sicilian commander: “the Sicilian, I think, if he had possessed some humorous inclination to wit, would have claimed him as his benefactor” (οἶμαι, ὁ Σικελός, εἴπερ εἶχε μυκτῆρά τινα νεύοντα πρὸς ἀστεϊσμόν, εἰς εὐεργέτην αὐτὸν προσεποιήσατο ἄν).<sup>253</sup> Preserving the honor of his fellow Byzantines, however, Eustathios contrasts David’s lethargy and cowardice with his soldiers’ love for the land of their fathers (πατρίδος θυμός), their courage, and eagerness to fight.<sup>254</sup> Abandoned by David, some of the brave soldiers continued to fight the Sicilians when they entered the city.<sup>255</sup>

The description of the Sicilian besiegers as barbarians attacking like wild beasts (θηριωδῶς) needs to be put in the context of the later destruction and bloodshed they caused in Thessalonike. To refer to Latins as barbarians was not

250 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 62(29)–64(12). See Brand (1968), p. 162. On Eustathios’s assessment of William II, see also the remarks of Lampakis (1988).

251 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 64(13)–68(15).

252 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 68(16)–104(3).

253 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 84(10–12).

254 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 84(13–17).

255 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 102(1–24).

a matter of course for the archbishop. For instance, Eustathios shows appreciation for Venetian institutions, and chooses respectful words for the papal legate who was killed during the riots of 1182.<sup>256</sup> After the city's fall, Eustathios claims, birds and other animals kept away, by which he suggests that they also hated all that was barbarous. This passage dramatizes the gravity of the capture and provides an opportunity for the literatus to make a learned allusion.<sup>257</sup> Even though the participation of clergymen in warfare is usually deemed unacceptable in Byzantine literature, Eustathios appears to approve of it in extreme situations, or at least to tolerate it while acknowledging the formal prohibition of bloodshed. One of the few who did not flee, but faced the Sicilians when they entered the city, was a monk named Boleas who slayed many Sicilians with his axe before he fell.<sup>258</sup> The defeated, including Eustathios, were apprehended, violently beaten, and threatened with death by the triumphant victors. The pirate leader Siphantos, an ally of the enemy, ordered the archbishop to mount a tiny pony in order to mock him. Many corpses were lying in the streets during his ride to the Sicilian ships. However, he fails to say that the cruelty was unusual for an army, Byzantine or non-Byzantine. Eustathios most likely had never witnessed anything comparable and, when he composed his account, the impression was still fresh. As previously mentioned, another possible motivation for his insistence on the inhumanity of the occupying forces was to distance himself from his collaboration with the conquerors. In saying that all Christians would cry at what he saw during his ride, he probably does not mean to say that the Sicilians were not Christians, but that they forgot their Christian morality during the storming of the city and the subsequent occupation.<sup>259</sup>

Eustathios does not apply the standards of the Byzantine military but rather of an educated, cultured archbishop preaching to his flock. The excesses and shameless greed of the conquerors, for food and riches, while bitterly lamented are not deemed unusual.<sup>260</sup> Eustathios reports an encounter with a certain William (Γελλέλλμος), described as a wild and violent man. The name and a reference to his "barbarous" language indicates a Latin origin. He had been chased

256 See Ch. 2, pp. 102, 116–117.

257 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 104(4–30).

258 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 90(21–27), 104(33)–106(1).

259 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 104(30)–108(15). As shown previously (Ch. 2, pp. 116–117), Eustathios expressed great appreciation of Latin Christianity as well, a prominent example being the description of the papal legate John.

260 See, e.g., EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 108(15–19): greed for Eustathios's wealth; 110(28)–112(8): greed, deemed unnatural, for unripe figs, throwing of excrement.

from Nicaea by Andronikos and is singled out for his opposition to the worship of holy images, apparently implied as a sign of mental derangement.<sup>261</sup> Threatened by him, the archbishop used his persuasive skill, suggesting that William spoke broken Greek rather than a Western language, as suggested by the verb βαρβαρίζειν. Eustathios spent the next few days in the quarters of the pretender Alexios Komnenos. Finally, he was brought to the Sicilian leaders, referring to them as “counts” (κόμητες). He also quotes the corresponding term derived from Italian—κόντοι—but admonishes that this solecism should not be used by good Greek-speakers. Eustathios affirms the superior social rank of men such as himself over the uneducated masses unable to employ the more cultivated register of language acquired by literati, and this polarity appears more important to him than ethnic origin.<sup>262</sup> Without giving details, he states that his rhetorical skills often mitigated his dire situation, enabling him to avoid being destitute. As it cannot be assumed that he spoke any language other than Greek, he may have had the means of an interpreter, although as is usual in contemporary Byzantine literature, such aspects are not discussed.<sup>263</sup>

While Eustathios goes on in detail about the horror and abuse the Byzantines had to suffer at the hand of the conquerors, his description also indicates that the excesses were not unusual in the context of war. Eustathios does, however, single out a particular misdeed as constituting an offense to God (θεομαχία): the desecration of churches and other holy places. The reaction of the archbishop, unaccustomed to the desecration of holy places, should be treated circumspectly. Given that these holy places housed many riches, it is understandable, given contemporary norms, that they would become targets for the soldiery.<sup>264</sup> Moreover, such accusations are not uncommon in medieval historiography and were often employed for propagandistic purposes.<sup>265</sup> Eustathios’s contemporaries Anna Komnene and Zonaras, for instance, illustrate the universality of a nefarious tendency of conquerors in their description of the capture of Constantinople by the forces of Alexios Komnenos in 1081. Anna compares the actions of her father’s troops, which spared neither

261 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Melville Jones, p. 212 (commentary referring to § 94).

262 See the remarks on this in Ch. 1, esp. pp. 25–32, 39–42, and Ch. 8.

263 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 108(15)–112(8). See EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Hunger, p. 107, n. 1 (p. 165). As discussed in Ch. 1, esp. pp. 26–28, 33–35, this phenomenon ought not to be interpreted as necessarily “anti-Latin” or “xenophobic,” but rather as an expression of cultural introspection.

264 Eustathios himself attests to the wealth of the city: see, e.g., EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 146(2–6).

265 Neocleous (2019), pp. 167–168.

churches nor holy places, to those of barbarians, and particularly laments that even the natives (αὐτόχθονες) among the soldiery participated.<sup>266</sup> Eustathios scornfully comments that the desecration of churches was somewhat mitigated by those who preferred to drag their victims outside before killing them. An exception was a eunuch, a commander in the Sicilian army. He held the rank of an “emir” (ἄμιρᾶς), an Arabic title incorporated within the political order of the Sicilian kingdom.<sup>267</sup> As he does with the most senior Sicilian commanders (the “counts”), Eustathios judges him favorably for having intervened and put an end to the desecration.<sup>268</sup>

The lamentation of the horrors resulting from the “inhumanity” (μισάνθρωπον) of the occupying forces should not be simply regarded as an “anti-Latin” treatise but reflects tension within Byzantine society and introspective concerns. Putting more trust in the higher estimate of the number of fallen (7,000), Eustathios laments the low estimate (5,000) given by the enemies because they belittled the tragedy by not counting those choked to death and killed inside houses. The Sicilian counts, however, stopped the killing and plundering in addition to other atrocities—in the case of rape, at least during daylight. However, Sicilian “knights” (ἱππότες) moved into the city, occupying the houses and taking the provisions of the inhabitants, thus causing poverty and hunger. The command that everyone dress like the Sicilians and eschew headwear is implied to have been another expression of their arrogance. Although some gave a modest amount of their coinage to Byzantines in need, most derided them. Eustathios complains that Jews and Armenians received more food for their money. What he terms “barbarian inhumanity” might have been a gesture to teach the defeated a lesson and demonstrate power: after

266 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* II.10.4, p. 81(92–11). Contradicting Anna’s description, IOANNES ZONARAS, pp. 728(17)–729(16), reports cruel bloodshed. He also explicates what the *Alexiad* only implies: rape, even of nuns, and the shameless humiliation of senators.

267 Ménager (1960).

268 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 112(9)–118(2). Eustathios claims that the Byzantines implored the Normans for mercy by crying κύριε ἐλέησον—“Lord, have mercy upon us”—a Greek expression also used in the Latin mass (see EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Melville Jones, p. 215, commentary referring to § 99). Despite this, the conquerors are said to have cruelly derided their victims by pretending not to understand. The desecration is further expounded on p. 126, where the conquerors are said to have disturbed the observance of fasting rules and religious services. Eustathios comes back to this topic on pp. 134–136, adding that an occurrence that some Latins had witnessed during the so-called Holy War in the capital (1181) may have contributed to the irritation. Pontani—NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 199, n.130 (p. 647)—notes that Eustathios’s description also points to differences between the Byzantine and Latin liturgies.

all, Byzantines of the Constantinopolitan faith ruled the empire. Collusion between Armenians and Latins, and thus tension between Armenian and other strata of the Byzantine population, is topical. Eustathios, by shifting attention to Armenians and Jews, may have attempted to counter criticism that he gained personal advantages from collaboration with the Sicilians. At any rate, even if Eustathios elaborately describes the Byzantine suffering, he does not blame the Latin West collectively but restricts his accusations to a specific group, namely Sicilian soldiers, in a specific context, the conquest of the empire's second city.<sup>269</sup>

Eustathios's limited praise for the Sicilian commander, Count Alduin (Ἀλδοῦϊνος), reminds his audience of their shared Christianity, which Eustathios calls into question by lamenting the disrespect shown towards the holy. By condemning their deeds, he alludes to the Christian religion of the Sicilians, which he suggests should have induced them to show more reverence. Count Alduin restored some order in the city, even donating money to repair the tomb of Saint Demetrios, in addition to books and candleholders. Eustathios received sacred vessels and holy images. The archbishop in turn reluctantly handed over those of the best quality to Alduin's retainers who had asked for them.<sup>270</sup>

Ambivalence characterizes the portrayal of Alduin, and the condemnation of the conquerors is less generalizing than may at first appear. Choniates's account differs somewhat, centering more on the cruelty of the capture and occupation. Eustathios condemns the Sicilian army for their hatred of the Byzantines, but distinguishes Alduin, whom he and his allies were able to persuade to issue orders not to harm the population any further. During his continued description of the Sicilians' humiliating treatment of the inhabitants, Eustathios summarizes their attitude thus: “they decided that there was no space for them and us in the world.” This comment, which resembles Choniates's claim about the vast chasm of difference between Byzantine and Latin, should be placed in the limited context of the literary description of a hostile army eager to plunder, to act as they please, and savor their victory rather than as a universally applicable assessment of Normans, other inhabitants of the Sicilian kingdom or Latins more generally.<sup>271</sup> The same can be

269 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 118(3)–126(19). See Garsoïan (1998).

270 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 126(20)–128(30). See Holmes (2019), pp. 147–150.

271 To the degree that this was not a pure literary intervention or exaggeration, it may point to the presence of certain soldiers or mercenaries in the army, not necessarily all Normans, who wished to take as much booty as possible, even at the price of expelling or killing

said about a collective designation as “Roman-haters” (μισορ[ρ]ώμαιοι)—it is important not to make generalizations about Byzantine attitudes based on this—very rare—characterization.<sup>272</sup> Asserting their rule, the Latins forced men to shave their beards and cut their hair.<sup>273</sup> While wearing beards, regarded as an ornament and symbol of manhood, was standard for Byzantine men, it is uncertain how much importance was attached to it. Literary sources express appreciation for the beauty of a beardless youth and refer to the habit, particularly of young men, of shaving their beards. Eustathios, a man of the Church, was not unlikely to overgeneralize the norm and thus draw an even sharper distinction between the Byzantines and their oppressive tormentors, although it was clearly meant and perceived as a degrading insult. Moreover, Eustathios may well overemphasize certain incidents as the norm practiced by the Sicilian soldiery and omit contrary examples.<sup>274</sup>

Murder and pillaging continued despite orders of the counts, but Eustathios accompanies his description with mitigating circumstances and once more does not spare his fellow Byzantines from criticism. He reports the fate of a wealthy citizen, robbed and subsequently murdered when he threatened to inform the Sicilian leaders. However, he mentions the willingness of some to share houses, albeit an unpleasant experience: “it was mutually kind in a certain way and more humane.” Saracens—presumably Sicilian mercenaries—broke into houses at night, but Eustathios indicates that other soldiers did likewise. While describing this as horrible, the passage contains a noteworthy differentiation: the more reasonable among the barbarians were content to bang at the door, break it, remove it, or at least deprive the inhabitants of sleep. Most people did what they could to placate the conquerors in a servile manner. Some even did so by harming their fellow Byzantines and revealing hidden treasures, others by allowing their daughters to fornicate with the conquerors, raising the archbishop’s particular condemnation. He also berates the pillaging of tombs, a behavior ascribed by William of Tyre to the populace in Constantinople during

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many or most Byzantine inhabitants of Thessalonike. As the sources attest, many non-Norman mercenaries and pirates had joined the expedition. See Brand (1968), p. 167.

- 272 Neocleous (2019), who usually refrains from such generalizations, exceptionally does so regarding Choniates’s and Eustathios’s isolated references to Latins as “Roman-haters” in the context of war (cf. pp. 126–127).
- 273 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 128(5)–132(16); see p. 130(1): “μὴ χωρητὸν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἡμῖν τὸν κόσμον εἶναι κρῖνουσι.” See EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Melville Jones, pp. 220–221 (commentary referring to § 119).
- 274 See Ch. 4, p. 172. See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 195, n. 123 (p. 645)—Choniates echoes Eustathios’s description; Anca (2010), pp. 167–169; Drocourt (2016), pp. 124–125.

the riots of 1182. Eustathios makes it plain that participants in said riots showed no respect for sacred things either.<sup>275</sup> It is deemed a horrific action, but one that any sinful Christian might stoop to, regardless of origin. Rather than a condemnation of Westerners in particular, the criticism pertains to a universal Christian inclination to sin. Eustathios continues to teach moral lessons, notably by condemning the behavior of the Byzantine commander David: these horrors occurred because the Thessalonians, or the Byzantines generally, paid no heed to divine indications until shortly before the capture.<sup>276</sup>

In summarizing the causes and significance of the event, Eustathios interprets it from a religious perspective, showing again that his account is more nuanced than it may first appear. What occurred at Thessalonike was bound to move virtually every human being: “Also those among the enemies who appeared to know God and some pity, being no savages, shed tears and mourned at the sight of such a sumptuous city being mistreated and robbed of its beauty.” In lamenting the destruction of things of value by brute soldiery, he singles out the violent destruction of and murder in the church hospital. This is noteworthy in relation to Eustathios’s previous comparison with the riots of 1182. He may have known of an attack on the hospital of St. John, reported by William of Tyre.<sup>277</sup> He stresses the ignorance of the soldiers, who did not know the value of their booty, destroying it or selling it for the wrong price. Evoking a moral dimension, the archbishop ascribes deaths among the Sicilians to immoderate consumption of wine, pork, beef, and garlic. As noted by Kyriakidis,<sup>278</sup> it is more likely that the Sicilian deaths were caused by an epidemic not unusual for the region and the season—apparently too ordinary a cause for Eustathios’s purposes. Count Alduin is said to have announced the death of over 3,000 of his men, making the total loss of lives more equal between the two sides.<sup>279</sup>

The narrative further illustrates Sicilian military prowess, but also continues to mitigate the condemnation of the Sicilians’ wild crudeness and indicate some cultural proximity. The archbishop won some over by means of

275 See Ch. 2, pp. 116–117.

276 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 132(17)–144(28); see p. 134(13): “ἦν δέ πως φιλάλληλον αὐτὸ καὶ ἀνθρωπικώτερον.”

277 WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 22.12(13). See also Ch. 2, p. 115–116.

278 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 182 (commentary).

279 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 144(28)–150(7); see p. 146(2–5): “ἐνθα καὶ τῶν πολεμίων οἱ φαινόμενοι Θεὸν εἰδέναι καὶ τι ἔχειν οἴκτου καὶ ἀθηρίωτοι ἐδάκρυον καὶ κατεστέναζον, βλέποντες πόλιν τοιαύτην οὕτω κατηγιασμένην καὶ ἐζημιωμένην καλοῖς.” The claim that the conquerors were ignorant of the value of their booty is repeated with further details on pp. 150(23)–152(5).

theological discussions,<sup>280</sup> which calls his assertion that they were collectively ignorant “of a cultivated lifestyle befitting a [Roman] citizen” (βίος ἡμέρος καὶ πολιτικός) into question. He may have overemphasized this in order to stress his own contrary qualities and those of his learned audience, as well as the gravity of the Byzantines’ collective punishment for their sins. The claim that the Sicilian army was 80,000 strong should not be taken literally, of course, but as an indication that it was gigantic.<sup>281</sup> Nevertheless, Eustathios may have received such a figure because Sicilians intended to frighten the Byzantines and make them less determined to resist any further advance towards the capital. The boast that 5,000 Sicilian knights could defeat 50,000 Byzantines alludes to the reputation of the effectiveness of Western cavalry. Eustathios also reports that the Sicilian fleet was composed of over 200 ships, including those of their pirate allies, some of whom may have escaped the Constantinopolitan riots of 1182.<sup>282</sup>

The concluding part of his work focuses on moral exhortation and underlines the function of the Sicilians as a foil. The sins of Thessalonians and other Byzantines—including envy, arrogance, calumny, mendacity, greed, perjury, the perversion of law and justice, extortion, a lack of friendship, gratitude and charity, contempt for as well as derision of saints, particularly Saint Demetrios—are identified as the true causes of the catastrophe. In these passages, a principal concern of the archbishop’s oeuvre in general becomes apparent: to draw attention to the faults of his contemporaries and to admonish them to better themselves. This concern can also be connected to the precarious authority of the Church in the twelfth century, and, more specifically, to the archbishop himself—he warns that God is just and will punish his people again if need be.<sup>283</sup>

Like Choniates regarding the conquest of 1204,<sup>284</sup> therefore, Eustathios portrays the Sicilians as instruments of divine retribution, which entails a hyperbolic description of their cruelty, crudeness, and inhumanity. Introducing nuance and ambivalence into his account, he indicates that they were Christians and human beings capable of pity and other virtues. What he condemns and criticizes in them is criticized and condemned in Byzantines.

280 Neocleous (2019), p. 97.

281 Brand (1968), p. 162.

282 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 150(7–23).

283 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, pp. 150(23)–158(18). See EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, trans. Melvilles Jones, p. 227 (commentary referring to § 144); Angold (2000), pp. 402–403, 457–467; Odorico (2006), pp. 166–167.

284 See Ch. 14, esp. pp. 370–371.



In conclusion, the work ought to be interpreted in a nuanced way, taking account of all these factors and not simply as an expression of “anti-Latin” attitudes. Moreover, Byzantine victories, Thessalonike’s liberation and ample revenge, celebrated by Choniates, followed swiftly after the capture. Accordingly, it did not necessarily lead to an increased, enduring, and general Byzantine animosity against Westerners, as has been alleged.<sup>285</sup>

Choniates’s portrayal is still ambivalent but more condemning in tone, leaving out nuanced and favorable remarks made by Eustathios, but equally persisting in criticizing fellow Byzantines.<sup>286</sup> It follows the earlier narrative in many respects,<sup>287</sup> beginning with the Byzantines forced into exile by Andronikos. Choniates emphasizes Byzantine shortcomings and sins, strongly criticizing the pretender Alexios Komnenos<sup>288</sup> and his ally Maleinos, both men blinded by ambition and paying no heed to the harm they were causing Romania by joining with King William and promising him large territories subject to Constantinople. Latin mercenaries in Byzantine service alienated by Andronikos’s rule—among them victims of 1182—made similar promises. Like Eustathios, Choniates speaks of a formidable army comprising mercenaries and thousands of riders, though he does not adopt Eustathios’s figures. The portrayal of David Komnenos, deemed craven and selfish, corresponds to other Byzantine individuals and groups subject to Choniates’s criticism and has an exhortatory quality.<sup>289</sup> He also expresses scorn for Andronikos’s armies, which were hesitant to attack the enemy before Thessalonike’s fall, when the Sicilian forces were divided: the Byzantines showed such weakness that the Sicilian leaders decided to advance quickly against Constantinople. Alexios Komnenos is again condemned for his naive illusions regarding the intentions of the Sicilian king, while Andronikos is criticized for his indecisive leadership.<sup>290</sup>

Behind Choniates’s hyperbolic rhetoric there are indications of the more ambivalent and complex attitude he appears to display toward Latins overall. In this his account is similar to Eustathios’s. The conquest is “another *Iliad* [in terms of suffering]” (ἄλλη τις Ἰλιάς) in accordance with the earlier account, but some aspects, such as the desecration of churches, are described in more

285 Cf. Malamut (2007), pp. 85 (“rupture définitive entre les Byzantins et les Occidentaux”), 99–101.

286 See above, p. 292, for Choniates’s possible motives for doing so.

287 See Simpson (2013), pp. 224–229, and the commentary accompanying Pontani’s translation of the account.

288 On him, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 177, n. 94 (p. 639).

289 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 296(70)–298(42).

290 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 317(4)–321(19).

gruesome detail. The intervention of the Sicilian leaders, stopping the worst bloodshed, is mentioned, albeit without appreciation. Choniates hyperbolically concludes that Latins are the worst conquerors, emphasizing the difference between a barbarian and a cultivated Byzantine who has kept his tongue pure of the Latin language and has nothing in common with them even with respect to clothing. The possible motives for this statement are manifold, but Eustathios's influence is apparent. Choniates expounds the horrors of the Latin occupation, decrying the "Roman-hater" (μισορρώμαιοσ) and hater of the "Hellene"—probably an allusion to cultivated men such as Eustathios and Choniates himself. They had no pity, he assures, and were ruthless and utterly brazen in their arrogance and greed. The description culminates in the famous passage about the vast chasm of difference between Byzantines and Latins. This must be balanced against Choniates's own testimony in the same passage and elsewhere that Byzantines often lived side by side with Latins in the empire—most likely volotunarily in most cases—and his personal familiarity and apparent friendship with Venetians and other Latin residents of Constantinople.<sup>291</sup>

Choniates will relativize his statements about Sicilian pitilessness and wild behavior later in the narrative, but again stresses that the enemies showed no mercy, exhibited behavior wilder than that of animals, with no respect for hygiene, sacred oil, or religious services, nor even minimal regard for the dignity and needs of their victims. As for their bathing in and drinking urine, Choniates, in his condemnation of the conquest, perhaps exaggerated and generalized in a manner similar to Eustathios.<sup>292</sup> He stresses that Eustathios played a crucial role in relieving the woes of the Thessalonians, putting his rhetorical talent and charisma to effective use by negotiating better conditions for the oppressed with the "counts" (κόντοι). He thereby motivated the enemy to adopt a milder and kinder behavior (πραότερον καὶ χρηστότερον).<sup>293</sup>

After a short consideration of events in the capital, Choniates expands the narrative of the Sicilian invasion beyond the capture of Thessalonike, Eustathios's report no longer serving as a source. The Sicilian army was divided

291 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 299(43)–302(37). See Ch. 2, pp. 91–93, 94–95, 99–101; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 189, n. 116 (pp. 643–644); Simpson (2013), pp. 319–320. Bossina (2009b), p. 182, notes that the abyss of disagreement also appears in Choniates's *Πανοπλία* in the context of the *filioque* and a Latin accusation against the Byzantines.

292 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 116(6–9); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 197, n. 126 (p. 645).

293 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 302(38)–308(17).

into three parts, two setting out to continue the conquests, the third staying in Thessalonike. This division is identified as a root cause of the Sicilian defeat. The scorn for the Latin tongue is echoed when Choniates refers to the exchange of letters between Andronikos and David prior to the capture of Thessalonike. The disapproval applies to the vulgar language spoken by the Byzantine masses. Jesters mocked the language of Emperor Andronikos's letters to David, thus corrupting the imperial word into indecent phrases in the common language (the register of language employed by most Byzantines). Choniates deems it inappropriate even to quote the phrases.<sup>294</sup> Therefore, it is not only the Latin tongue which is held in low esteem.<sup>295</sup> The scorn is not only contextual—the condemnation of the Sicilians—but, far from being simply “xenophobic,” also relates to the social status of those who command the history's register of Hellenic language.<sup>296</sup>

Choniates's description of the Byzantine counter-offensive puts his condemnation of the alleged barbaric cruelty of the Sicilians in perspective but also acknowledges their military prowess. The tide was turning to the advantage of the Byzantines. Advancing rapidly toward the capital, the Sicilians were excessively sure of victory, but the accession of Isaakios II greatly strengthened hopes to repel them. While volunteers from Asia were being equipped, reinforcing the army of the general Branas, the Sicilians were becoming careless due to their previous successes and the lack of resistance they had encountered. A first success then increased Byzantine confidence. The history celebrates Byzantine accomplishments to such a degree that, by contrast with the description of Sicilian atrocities at Thessalonike, it glosses over the cruelty of the revenge and even celebrates it.<sup>297</sup> Choniates can be explicit when castigating the inhumanity of emperors and fellow Byzantines,<sup>298</sup> but in this case the Byzantines appear as instruments of divine justice. Choniates relates, however, that during the final major battle, the Sicilians resisted bravely before they were forced to relent.<sup>299</sup> In any case, the description both of the conquest

294 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 225, n. 8 (p. 657).

295 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 317(4)–318(21).

296 See Ch. 1, pp. 39–41, for the importance of this identity marker.

297 See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 360(29–50), where he describes without censure how Alan mercenaries killed the Normans who had remained behind in Thessalonike, even in churches where they sought refuge.

298 To cite two of numerous examples in addition to the well-known case of Andronikos: NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 366(4)–367(25): Isaakios II's disregard of his promise to be merciful; 291(41)–292(58), 369(74–77), 370(94–12): cruelty of the tyrant Isaakios Komnenos of Cyprus.

299 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 356(24)–359(15). See the discussion in Kolia-Dermitzaki (2008), p. 47, n. 66, and the observations by Schmitt (1997), pp. 168–169, 172, deeming that

of Thessalonike and of the victory over the Sicilians are marked by what Lilie terms Choniates's "sensationalism."<sup>300</sup>

The subsequent narrative further highlights the need to put the account of Thessalonike's capture in context and indicates cultural proximity with the Sicilians. Choniates introduces the commanders Alduin and Ῥιτζάρδος (Richard, count of Acerra) by name. Alduin's alleged self-comparison to Alexander the Great alludes to a common Greco-Roman heritage of Latins and Byzantines.<sup>301</sup> Considering the horrific capture of Thessalonike, Choniates concludes that God punished the Byzantines only for a short time, but the enemy for infinitely longer, both being chastised in the end for their sins. He (over)emphasizes the scale of the Byzantine triumph and Sicilian defeat. The contradictory, hyperbolic descriptions of the conquest and the relatively mild castigation of the Byzantines thus need to be weighed against each other to make sense. The Sicilian fleet was damaged badly on its retreat, the number of the fallen was as high as 10,000, and captives numbered more than 4,000. The prisoners endured horrendous conditions, according to Choniates, for they were forced to rely on donations alone, receiving nothing otherwise—Pontani notes the implication that, unlike Byzantine prisoners, they could not hope for the help of relatives.<sup>302</sup> Thus, many perished. This was perhaps a form of retribution for the Sicilian treatment of the Thessalonians.<sup>303</sup>

Choniates is critical of the failure of the new emperor to pay heed to King William's resulting letter to him, not even granting burial to those who starved to death: the letter deplored the situation and appealed to the Christian faith of both sides, stating that Isaakios would be like a wild animal in disregard of the law of humanity if he executed the prisoners and that he was obligated to feed them if he did not. The roles have been reversed: it is the Byzantine emperor who is pitiless, whereas the Sicilian king pleads for mercy. Isaakios's treatment of Richard and Alduin is criticized: they took off their hoods and bowed to the emperor in a servile fashion, by which Choniates implies that they were unfamiliar with Byzantine ceremonial. The Sicilian leaders were forced to apologize for their derision of the *basileus* prior to their defeat—Choniates chooses

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Choniates might have been personally intrigued by this major victory, especially in light of the many defeats suffered subsequently under Isaakios 11.

300 Lilie (2014), p. 179.

301 William II is also derided for stubbornly holding on to Epidamnos/Dyrrachion, which he eventually had to abandon, probably in ca. 1187. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 327, n. 34 (pp. 694–695); Schlichte (2005), p. 300.

302 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 333, n. 40 (p. 695).

303 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 359(15)–363(24).

to refer to the details of this derision, thus criticizing Isaakios implicitly.<sup>304</sup> Alduin, described as a good flatterer, was able to talk himself out of punishment. Thus, Choniates’s subsequent account contributes to putting the topical description of the invaders as cruel, ignorant brutes devastating Thessalonike in perspective.<sup>305</sup>

The narrative of the Sicilian war concludes with Isaakios’s attempt to reconquer Cyprus from his namesake, the usurper Isaakios Komnenos: The “tyrant” of Cyprus won with the help of the ships of the pirate Margaritone, who served the king of Sicily. The commanders of the Byzantine fleet were captured.<sup>306</sup> Choniates introspectively focuses first and foremost on the emperor’s mistakes and the flaws of the fleet commanders.<sup>307</sup>

304 Kaldellis (2013), p. 53.

305 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 363(24)–366(3).

306 See Ch. 2, pp. 126–127.

307 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 369(74)–370(12). See also Schmitt (1997), p. 172. On a parallel account of the Norman operations in Cyprus and Patmos, the *Life of Saint Christodoulos*, see Lavagnini (1975), Vranoussi (1976); Hinterberger (2011), pp. 133–134.

## The Hero's Challenge

### *Incursions of "Franks," "Latins," and "Kelts"*

Unsurprisingly, the portrayal of crusades and crusaders in contemporary Byzantine historiography<sup>1</sup> displays the characteristic features of the portrayal of Westerners more generally. As for the peculiarities of the representation of crusades and their participants, the concept of the crusade or Holy War is not the central issue. While significant differences between Western and Byzantine outlooks on the matter can be observed, criticism of the crusades of the long twelfth century notably pertains to the rights and integrity of the Byzantine Empire and their infringement by crusaders rather than to Western concepts of Holy War or in particular to the promise of eternal life through participation.<sup>2</sup> As will be shown, the medieval (Eastern) Roman emperors, representing themselves as overlords of the Christian ecumene and lands formerly ruled directly by Romania as well as protectors of the Holy Places, therefore sought to be recognized as such by all crusaders and later the crusader polities. As for the prophecy of the last emperor laying down his crown in Jerusalem, also made use of in the West, Komnenian emperors associated themselves with it in this context. The prophecy also corresponded to the eschatological role ascribed to the *basileus* according to imperial ideology.<sup>3</sup>

It will also become apparent that Byzantine historiography reflects fickle and complex relations with the crusaders that were by no means only hostile or reflective of (mounting) tension culminating in 1204, as has frequently been alleged in the scholarship,<sup>4</sup> but were also sometimes positive, friendly and indicative of common markers of identity between Westerners and Byzantines.

Anna Komnene's account of the First Crusade<sup>5</sup> confirms these characteristics. However, it is throughout strongly marked by the image of her father,

1 The terms "crusade" and "crusaders," not corresponding to contemporary Byzantine or Western terminology, are used for the sake of convenience. For Byzantine vocabulary for crusades and crusaders in the long twelfth century, see Kolia-Dermitzaki (1991a).

2 Kolia-Dermitzaki (1991b, 2012); Stouraitis (2011), with extensive bibliography; Chrissis (2016).

3 IOANNES ZONARAS, *Hist.*, p. 760(8–18); Magdalino (2005), pp. 49–50.

4 See Introduction, pp. 13–14, for this general point.

5 For Anna's account of the crusade and the First Crusade more generally, see Buisson (1985); Lilie (1987, 1993a, 1993b); (2004), esp. pp. 212–215; Magdalino (1996); Shepard (1997); Stephenson (2003); Frankopan (2012); Harris (2014).

her indirect comparison of him to his successors and the related introspective agenda.<sup>6</sup> The masses of crusaders are therefore depicted as larger and—led by Bohemond—more malicious and more difficult to contain, especially the People's Crusade, than anything that came later. The role of the pope and Alexios's previous diplomatic interaction are eclipsed by this agenda. It is not possible that Anna had no idea of the papacy's role, for she emphasizes the religious and political importance of the pope in the West when referring to Gregory VII. It is also unlikely that she was completely unaware of her father's preceding diplomatic activities in the West.<sup>7</sup> The entire account of the crusade accords with Alexios's role as a heroic and inventive ruler who had to react to innumerable challenges and suffer for the good of the polity. It is clearly implied that he lived up to the imperial ideal.<sup>8</sup> In accordance with this approach, Anna presents the arrival of the First Crusade as a surprise, the rumors of its advance reaching Alexios when he is still recovering from the exertion of his last campaign. The *Alexiad* contradicts evidence that the emperor expected mercenaries to come to his realm in response to his recruiting efforts. However, neither he nor the pope could have initially anticipated the numbers that arrived in Romania in 1096, particularly the masses of people untrained for warfare attracted by the persuasiveness of Peter of Amiens and others.<sup>9</sup>

Anna's focus on Bohemond as her father's main opponent contributes to further distortions of the historical events. While the goal of the crusade, according to the *Alexiad*, was to liberate holy sites, a group led by Bohemond considered the imperial city a bonus (πόρισμα) that could be won on the way to the Holy Land. Prophetic predictions of the capture of Constantinople, which had existed long before the First Crusade, did play a part, but, as Anna indicates, they were not associated with the crusade by everyone and such associations may not have been that pervasive among the Byzantine population.<sup>10</sup> The pope's role in motivating Christians to take up arms against the infidels

6 For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature generally, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

7 Lilie (2004), pp. 33, 35; Frankopan (2012), pp. 6–11, 88–100; Harris (2014), p. 55. Harris's assertion that the omission of Urban II means nothing is accordingly doubtful. On this, see also Kolia-Dermizaki (2012), p. 128; Preiser-Kapeller (2016), p. 89; Neocleous (2019), pp. 6–14.

8 See the second section of Ch. 12 for the application of this ideal to the Western emperor Henry VI.

9 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.4, pp. 296(3)–297(18). See Frankopan (2012), pp. 117–124. Frankopan (2002), however, fails to convince. Neglecting crucial aspects of Anna's agenda and the literary character of the *Alexiad*, Frankopan argues that Anna assesses her father critically, that her account of the crusade is “accurate,” and that the omission of the pope's role is likely due to a genuine inability to procure information.

10 Magdalino (2005), p. 53. See also Ch. 1, pp. 32–33.

is taken over completely by Peter of Amiens, also known as Peter the Hermit, in Anna's account.<sup>11</sup> Describing him as a persuasive preacher leading the first wave of the crusade, Anna specifies that, from the outset, he spoke of Jerusalem as the goal of the expedition when preaching in the West. Like Latin sources, she stresses the diversity of participants, said to hail from all lands between the Adriatic and the Pillars of Hercules (entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar). Locusts—a divine indicator—announce their arrival, with interpreters proclaiming that the expedition will target the barbarous Ismaelites (Muslims).<sup>12</sup> This is another indication that the crusade was far from being interpreted by everyone in Romania as the fulfillment of prophetic and eschatological predictions of Constantinople's capture.

Anna accentuates, however, the crusaders' eagerness to possess the imperial capital, again in order to emphasize the trouble Alexios had to face. In Peter's call to arms she identifies a welcome pretext for some Latins who had long harbored a desire to rule over the Romans—the parallel case of Raiktor/Pseudo-Michael ought to be recalled.<sup>13</sup> While Peter's aim was the Holy Sepulcher, Bohemond and other barons nurtured an old wrath against Alexios, seeking revenge for the emperor's victory over the Normans in 1083. Anna adds that Alexios had known of their wickedness for a long time, and so was able to meet their challenge. After a misunderstanding leading to the outbreak of hostilities, the *Alexiad* has the crusaders attack Constantinople, setting fire to a gate. This is said to have frightened the Byzantines, who feared that the city might fall as a form of divine retribution for the barbarous sack of 1081. But, as in numerous instances in the *Alexiad*, the emperor remains calm while his subjects tremble.<sup>14</sup>

Following the same motivation, Anna insists on the flawed character of the Franks, a characterization, appropriate for a literary work, that corresponds to old *topoi* associated with barbarians. This stance serves to exculpate the emperor for what went wrong during the expedition, for which Alexios was criticized at the time the *Alexiad* was composed, particularly in the context of Manouel I's handling of the Second Crusade.<sup>15</sup> The Frankish crusaders are

11 In the *Alexiad*, he appears as Petros, but his original byname Koukoupetros is introduced as well. See ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 335, n. 99.

12 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.5–10, pp. 297(18)–299(89).

13 See Ch. 9, pp. 251–253.

14 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.10, p. 299(77–83), x.6.7, p. 301(57–63), x.9.1–9, pp. 308(54)–310(17). See Lilie (1987), pp. 73–78. Chapters 5 and 6 of Book X speak only of some, notably the “more devious” (πονηρότεροι) and “more daring” (γενναίότεροι), while in Chapter 9 she applies the statement more generally to the barons, albeit more strongly to Bohemond. See Ch. 9, p. 262.

15 As discussed, among others, by Magdalino (2000c) and Stephenson (2003).



introduced as frightening to Alexios, who knew them for their irresistible attacks, the inconstancy of their convictions, their persuasibility, and “everything else pertaining to the nature of the Kelts throughout as a part of it or as inseparable concomitants,” including their greed for money and susceptibility to breaking agreements.<sup>16</sup>

Anna thus portrays the crusaders as greedy barbarians tormenting Alexios, rather than dealing with their perspective and adopting a more charitable view. Such a view would have considered that the crusaders were not simply “greedy” but had to bear the enormous cost of the enterprise and had an understandable interest in obtaining as much support from the *basileus* as they could.<sup>17</sup>

The march to Asia Minor led by Peter the Hermit is a further illustration of the problem that Alexios had to contend with. Peter, with his following of 180,000, including 100,000 riders, foolishly risked an advance against the emperor’s advice—these figures in Anna’s account are of course hyperbolic and serve to magnify the threat the emperor had to face. Among the crusaders, Anna relates, were 10,000 “Normans,”<sup>18</sup> who did not hesitate to plunder and were even purported to slaughter babies and roast them over a fire. Non-Greek sources describe similar atrocities committed by crusaders. Anna probably had reports of such atrocities and included one in her account in order to illustrate the savagery of the men her father had to deal with.<sup>19</sup> True to their characterization as greedy and foolish, the Normans quarrel over their booty and get slaughtered by the Turks. Disregarding the lack of training of most of Peter’s followers and merely referring to their lack of discipline, Anna ascribes their defeat to the character of Westerners. Peter was finally rescued by Alexios’s men, but, in a sign of his Latin haughtiness, Anna concludes, ungratefully put the blame on everyone else, denouncing them as robbers and speaking of divine retribution for their sins.<sup>20</sup>

Anna’s portrayal of Godfrey of Bouillon (Γοντοφρέ) largely follows the same tendency, but the role of Hugh of Vermandois introduces some nuance. Godfrey’s contingent is deemed enormous: 10,000 riders and 70,000 on foot.

16 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.4, p. 297(6–13); (see p. 297(8–9): “τὰλλα ὀπόσα ἡ τῶν Κελτῶν φύσις ὡς ἴδια ἢ παρακολουθήματά τινα ἔχει διαπαντός.”)

17 Lilie (2004), pp. 49–51.

18 Νορμάνοι, which is probably meant to indicate that they came from Normandy.

19 Maalouf (1983), esp. ch. III; Cobb (2014), esp. ch. 3 and p. 96. See also Frankopan (2012), pp. 118–124, noting that Western sources confirm the brutality of the so-called People’s Crusade.

20 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.5.10–x.6.6, p. 299(83)–301(57). See Lilie (1987), pp. 63–64.

His obstinate refusal to swear the oath to Alexios concerning the restitution of former Byzantine possessions illustrates his arrogance. The *Alexiad* contrasts him with Hugh (Οὐββος): he had already sworn the oath and acted as the voice of reason, advancing the reliance of the crusaders on the emperor's protection and support on their journey.<sup>21</sup> The description of Hugh relativizes the foolishness Anna alleges. The Latins are said to have suffered losses in a skirmish that left many victims on both sides. The implication is that Godfrey's character was to blame for the casualties. He finally felt constrained to capitulate, receiving rewards and provisions for his troops in exchange.<sup>22</sup>

The account concerning the arrival of Raoul, an unidentified participant,<sup>23</sup> with a force of 15,000 displays the same trajectory. Insolent and obstinate, Raoul is said to have welcomed an attempt by Konstantinos Opos to intimidate him with his Byzantine troops and to force his army to cross to Asia Minor. A lion hungry for battle, he attacked the Byzantine army. Many of Raoul's subordinates having fallen in battle, the remaining men now begged the Byzantines to be allowed to cross. The request was gladly accepted by Alexios to avoid them uniting with Godfrey. While Alexios's concern to avoid a unification of the crusaders is confirmed by other sources, Anna magnifies a few light skirmishes to give the impression that major battles occurred.<sup>24</sup>

Anna continues in this hyperbolic vein with an indirect comparison to the Second Crusade and Alexios's successors. More crusaders followed Raoul from nearly all lands of the "Kelts," she relates: kings, dukes, barons, and even bishops. No kings are known to have participated in the First Crusade, but Anna, attempting to show that the First Crusade was a greater challenge than the one her nephew Manouel faced, insinuated their participation since the Second Crusade was led by two kings.<sup>25</sup> In accordance with these allegations, Anna is vague: she declares herself unwilling to name all the barbaric leaders and adds that it would not be appropriate due to their sheer number. Alexios is said to have granted them sufficient provisions to avoid any pretext to plunder, a statement that may imply a criticism of Manouel.<sup>26</sup> More demonstrations of

21 Hugh's oath was a precedent for other leaders, especially because, as the brother of the king of France, he was of high rank. See Lilie (2004), p. 41.

22 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.9.1, pp. 308(54)–309(72), x.9.10–11, pp. 313(80)–314(13).

23 Lilie (2004), p. 45.

24 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.10.1–2, pp. 314(14)–315(43). See Lilie (1987), pp. 75–84, (2014), p. 180.

25 Anna might also refer to the arrival of Scandinavian kings a few years after the passage of the First Crusade. See Buckler (1929), p. 438; Scheel (2015), pp. 168, 913–915, 1054–1063, 1084–1086.

26 See the next chapter, p. 337.

the emperor's prudence follow: Alexios received the leaders separately and, using mediators, made them swear the same oath as had Godfrey, who also witnessed the event. While some tried to find excuses for refusing, saying that they wished to wait for Bohemond, Alexios skillfully persuaded them. Anna points to Alexios's strategy of increasing pressure on the remaining leaders by reminding them of the oaths already sworn by their fellow crusaders. This allows her the opportunity to contrast Alexios's wisdom and generosity with the crusaders' insolence and barbarous nature.<sup>27</sup>

The trouble Alexios had to endure is made to appear endless. Nevertheless, Anna again indicates common markers of identity<sup>28</sup> and that not all crusaders were foolish: When a noble dared to sit on the imperial throne—further proof of the boundless arrogance of Franks—Baldwin of Boulogne, introduced as Godfrey's brother, admonished the insolent perpetrator. Alexios had the Latin's insolent reaction to Baldwin interpreted. The emperor approached him and, magnanimously, asked him his origin. The Latin boasted about his noble lineage and military prowess proven in a duel in a church in his native land—virtues that Byzantines would equally appreciate. Alexios, superior in every way, generously gave him advice on how to fight the Turks in Asia Minor. Anna further recounts that the ignorant man later forgot about Alexios's counsel and was heavily wounded in battle, causing the loss of forty men in the process. The whole story is designed to illustrate the character of the crusaders, the scale of Alexios's troubles, and his heroic composure.<sup>29</sup> In Book XIV, where Anna describes Alexios's physical ailments, she relates how Alexios spared no efforts to influence the crusaders to his advantage, always being accessible to them. The "Keltic" barons, however, are declared insolent and widely known for their extreme garrulousness, paying no heed to orderly behavior (*εὐταξία*) and the emperor's limited time. They did not even leave him in peace at night. Nevertheless, she maintains, Alexios never interrupted them because he knew their natural irritability and feared that it might do harm to the empire. Alexios thus stood for hours like a statue, which contributed to the rheumatic affliction of his legs.<sup>30</sup>

27 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.10.3–5, pp. 315(44)–316(74).

28 See also below, pp. 317–319.

29 Lilie (2014), pp. 187–188.

30 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.10.5–7, pp. 315(63)–317(13), x1.3.4, pp. 330(86)–331(92), xiv.4.2–9, pp. 439(60)–442(72). See Lilie (2004), p. 214. There may be a kernel of truth in Anna's portrayal, insofar as personal accessibility may have been an important element of Alexios's diplomacy. On this point, see Shepard (1996).

Anna continues to insist on the purity of her father's conduct and motives regarding the crusaders as Christians and his subordinates by virtue of their oaths, Bohemond being the main troublemaker. Alexios's aim, she relates, was that Bohemond would cross quickly to Asia Minor, unable to unite with other leading crusaders and inflict terrible harm on the Byzantines.<sup>31</sup> Alexios is declared true to his obligation to support the crusaders. This support was particularly needed against the Turks. However, Anna repeats her general excuse that he was still mindful of their flaws and superior numbers. She thus shields her father against criticism and obscures the point that his concerns, the reconquest of Asia Minor in particular, had more to do with realpolitik.<sup>32</sup> Anna also appears to downplay this goal in her version of the recapture of Nicaea in favor of Alexios's honorable intentions, relating that he attempted to occupy the city to prevent the crusaders from plundering it. The "barbarians" agreed that handing Nicaea over to the Byzantines was preferable to a Frankish capture. Then, however, the sultan approached with his army, but was defeated in a bloody battle. Alexios's envoy Boutoumites persuaded the Turks to hand over the city, but cautiously reckoned with the possibility that the Franks would still occupy it, knowing their massive (superior) numbers, inconstancy, and irresistible onslaught. Later, as the *doux* of Nicaea, he displayed the same caution by allowing only small groups to visit the city. Anna also justifies Alexios's taking control of Nicaea with the comment that the Franks were so greedy that they would sell their wives and children for an obol—a topical comment Anna makes more than once.<sup>33</sup> Alexios's imperial magnanimity was so boundless, Anna implies, that he nevertheless fulfilled his obligation to protect Christians by supporting the crusaders in ways other than joining forces.<sup>34</sup> When describing the Byzantine recovery of cities in Asia Minor after the departure of the crusaders, Anna does not credit them for their contribution, an admission that would have undermined their characterization as troublemakers of no use to Romania.<sup>35</sup>

The *Alexiad* elaborately exculpates Alexios for not coming personally to the aid of the crusaders at Antioch: having dealt with Asia Minor, Alexios was prepared to assist the crusade in Syria. He met Latins at Philomelion and

31 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x.11.1, p. 317(14–27). See Ch. 9, pp. 262–263.

32 Shephard (1996), pp. 124–128.

33 See Ch. 2, p. 81.

34 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x.11.8–x1.2, pp. 320(14)–329(39).

35 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x1.5, pp. 335(20)–338(20). See Lillie (2004), p. 61, who deems the contribution of the crusaders to the recovery of Byzantine dominions in Asia Minor to be undeniable.

learned that their fellow crusaders were about to be decimated in Antioch. Alexios, aware of his responsibility, was eager to come to their aid, but reports of a large army of “barbarians” (Muslims) under Kerbogha caused him to deem the situation hopeless. Anna then makes a topical characterization of the Frankish approach to war: the Franks, idiosyncratic and rejecting counsel, made no use of strategic discipline and knowledge (στρατηγική εὐταξία καὶ ἐπιστήμη). Although they were great warriors with an irresistible attack, they could be easily defeated by a skillful enemy. When trapped their heavy gear hindered them, and their courage turned to cowardice because of their passionate and irrational thinking (τὸ τῆς γνώμης θυμοειδὲς καὶ ἀλόγιστον). Being unable to teach them or change their character, the emperor had no choice but to retreat.<sup>36</sup> This hyperbolic excuse relies on barbarian *topoi* and contradicts Anna’s portrayal of Robert Guiscard and Bohemond, who are described as prudent generals, smart, disciplined, steady, and enduring.<sup>37</sup> Anna ignores a view adopted by many crusaders, namely that Alexios’s failure to come to Antioch after the victory over Kerbogha rendered their oaths null and void.<sup>38</sup> Her insistence on Alexios’s reasons not to come to the aid of the crusaders points to the importance of Antioch to Romania, as well as to repercussions of Alexios’s dealings with the crusaders on later Byzantine relations with Antioch and other crusader polities.<sup>39</sup> Anna’s use of ancient barbarian *topoi*—faithlessness, obstinacy, and inconstancy in particular—fits the purpose of exculpating the emperor, for whom the oaths of crusaders and other Westerners may have had more value than his daughter suggests.<sup>40</sup>

The *Alexiad* gives a similar account of the second wave of crusaders, also known as the crusade of 1101. Anna specifies that their arrival was announced when Raymond of Toulouse was staying in the capital. She speaks of an army of Normans led by two brothers called Φλάντρως, by which she refers to the count of Biandrate and his brother, the leaders of the Lombard crusade.<sup>41</sup> Anna leaves out other participants, but this was unimportant. Her chief motivation

36 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.6.1–4, pp. 338(21)–339(68).

37 See Ch. 9, pp. 250, 254–261, 269–270.

38 Lilie (2004), p. 57 (citing the arguments brought up by William of Tyre). See also Shepard (1996), pp. 123–130, on the advantages and downsides of Alexios’s diplomatic dealings with crusaders and the differences between the Latin and Byzantine sources with regard to the perception of the emperor’s (initial) generosity.

39 Lilie (2004), p. 66. On Byzantine-Antiochene relations in the 1100s, see also the detailed study by Todt (1998), esp. chs. 6 and 7; Asbridge (2000), pp. 50–68, 92–103; and Buck (2017).

40 Shepard (1996), pp. 106–108.

41 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 386, n. 215.

is made plain by the following narrative: Despite Alexios's prudent advice, the enormous army—allegedly 50,000 riders and 100,000 foot soldiers—insisted on advancing toward Chorosan rather than marching along the coast to unite with the other Latins. Having taken Ankyra (modern Ankara) by storm, they crossed the Halys River and came to a small Christian town. Since they were of the same faith, priests came out to greet them. However, the Westerners cruelly killed them and all other Christians. It is possible that Anna may have picked up on an oral tradition. Whatever the background of the story, its brief mention in the *Alexiad* has likely to do with her emphasis on the savage inclination of the Franks with the purpose of defending Alexios's handling of the crusade. In the end, nearly all crusaders were defeated and slaughtered by Turks because they had chosen to ignore Alexios's advice. Anna likely intended to imply that their fate was perhaps divine retribution for the slaughtering of Christians.<sup>42</sup>

When relating her father's dealings with crusader polities after Bohemond's final defeat in 1108, Anna returns to the character of the Franks that she says made Alexios's life so difficult. When hearing that Tancred was unwilling to comply and hand over Antioch to imperial representatives (in 1111), the emperor is said to have considered the oaths sworn by the crusaders, including Tancred himself, and all Byzantine resources placed at their disposal, despite their perjury, their arrogant and unfriendly demeanor. He was determined to take revenge for this behavior, deemed unworthy of human beings (*ἀπανθρώπια*). They are said to have broken Alexios's heart, and he to have found their hubris unbearable.<sup>43</sup> As noted by Lilie, Anna ignores the opinions of most crusaders regarding the oaths. She is also silent concerning Alexios's likely consideration that the crusaders could help recover parts of Asia Minor, but would never succeed in making further conquests in the East and would have no chance of capturing Antioch, let alone making it to Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup>

The emperor was forced to put up again with the insatiable Latin greed for money, Anna continues, when he tried to gain allies against Tancred among rulers of the crusader polities. When Alexios's embassy met King Baldwin of Jerusalem at Tyre, which the king was besieging, they observed that he had become careless after initial successes. The Franks, failing to benefit from a favorable opportunity, were beaten by the Muslims of Tyre and regretted their carelessness (*ῥαθυμία*). When Alexios's envoy Boutoumites tried to deceive Baldwin, the king could not be fooled. He used the incident to pressure Boutoumites to give him money, but the Byzantine envoy discovered

42 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.8.1–4, pp. 346(52)–347(4).

43 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIV.2.1–2, pp. 427(18)–428(42).

44 Buisson (1985), pp. 29–30; Lilie (2004), p. 62.

that Baldwin was inclined to support Tancred over Alexios. The same was true for Ἰατζουλῖνος (Joscelin of Edessa). Anna comments that all barbarians (τὸ βάρβαρον ἅπαν) are always willing to take and unwilling to do anything in return.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to fulfilling the crucial function of emphasizing the odds the *basileus* had to face, deemed far greater than those faced by his successor, the barbarian *topoi* Anna employs for the crusaders need to be weighed against elements in her account that create a more ambivalent picture. Raymond of Toulouse, albeit deemed an exception, is characterized in flattering terms. Moreover, Anna indicates that the Latins valued and appreciated Raymond for his virtues, implying that their disposition could not be wholly bad.<sup>46</sup> The crusaders could be devout Christians, though often erring. In various instances, Anna praises her father's concern as a good Christian emperor to treat the Latins accordingly, to provide guidance and avoid bloodshed. An outbreak of hostilities on a holy day is said to have caused Alexios to request the Franks not to fight on such a day and to appeal to the passion of Christ. Even when they paid no heed, he told his troops to intimidate but not kill them in reverence for the holy day. The archers were told to aim at their horses, Anna relates, also connecting this with praise of her husband Nikephoros's skill in archery. Faithful to Alexios's orders, Nikephoros only wounded an insolent Latin.<sup>47</sup>

The few positive references to the Christian religion of the crusaders have to do with the concern to portray Alexios as a flawless Christian emperor, but are also relevant for their own sake. Although Anna criticizes the political claims of the pope and the Latin clergy's practice of bearing arms, she never refers to Western Christians in terms of schismatics or heretics. Since the *Alexiad* was not composed for diplomatic purposes nor addressed to Latins, this is significant.<sup>48</sup> Anna also suggests that God granted the Franks victory over the barbarians (i.e., the Muslims). In military confrontations between the Franks and Muslims, who the barbarians are is clear.<sup>49</sup> Anna attests to her father's willingness to fight with the Latins against the "godless Turks"

45 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIV.2.6–14, pp. 429(74)–434(27). For these negotiations with Jerusalem and Tripolis, see Asbridge (2000), p. 122.

46 See Ch. 15, p. 411.

47 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.9.5–9, pp. 310(8)–313(80). The praise is connected with Anna's concern for her personal prestige, see Ch. 1, p. 47.

48 See also Smythe (1992), ch. 5; Tinnefeld (2002), for Anna's ambivalent portrayal of Latin Christianity in general.

49 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.3.6, p. 331(10–17), XI.6.2, pp. 338(29)–339(48), XI.6.8, p. 341(12–28), XI.12.5, pp. 357(61)–358(67), XII.1.3–4, p. 360(25–46), XII.8.4, p. 379(80–85). See also Ch. 9, p. 264, regarding Norman-Muslim confrontations.

(ἄθροισι Τοῦρκοι) and records crusaders praying in the churches of Nicaea after Alexios's forces have occupied the city.<sup>50</sup> Her account of the discovery of the Holy Lance is noteworthy, even if it serves the characterization of Raymond of Toulouse: When the Latins were in danger in Antioch, they begged "bishop" Peter for counsel.<sup>51</sup> Peter responded that God's refusal to help was due to the sins of the crusaders, which necessitated repentance. They acted accordingly and, advised to dig for the Holy Lance, finally recovered it. They brought it to Peter trembling with religious awe (χαρά καὶ φόβῳ). It was then entrusted to the exemplary Raymond of Toulouse.<sup>52</sup> Before the deciding battle against the Turks, Φλάντρως (Count Robert of Flanders) prayed and implored God for assistance. With divine assistance, the Franks overcame the enemy with their horses and lances, putting them to flight.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, Anna relates that when Alexios considered the betrayal by the crusaders and their unreliability, he still felt responsible for them as part of the Christian ecumene presided over by him as the one Roman emperor.<sup>54</sup> Neocleous has recently shown how ideas of Christian fraternity were influential among the crusaders as well with regard to Byzantium.<sup>55</sup>

For the nobility and military prowess of the Franks, Anna expresses appreciation in accordance with the virtues upheld in imperial and aristocratic circles. Godfrey of Bouillon, for instance, is cited as boasting (μεγάλως αὐχῶν) about his wealth, his manly bravery (ἀνδρεία), his nobility (*gennaiotēs*), and the splendid reputation of his family (γένους περιφάνεια). While deeming Godfrey boastful, Anna does not deny these attributes and implicitly acknowledges their worth as virtues, desirable also for the Byzantine aristocracy in literary works. This attribution of noble birth (*eugeneia*) to Westerners can be linked to Konstantinos VII's treatise on the governance of the empire which, although composed in the mid-tenth century in a particular context, deems only Franks worthy of an imperial marriage alliance due to Konstantinos the Great's origin from their lands and the *eugeneia* of their families.<sup>56</sup>

50 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.2.2, p. 325(4–15), XI.2.10, p. 329(34–39).

51 It was not Peter of Amiens who was involved in this discovery of the Holy Lance, but that hardly made a difference to Anna. The episcopal title may refer to Adhemar of Le Puy. See ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 380, n. 95.

52 See Mayer (2005), pp. 73–74; Frankopan (2012), pp. 164–166. See also Ch. 15, pp. 410–413, for the portrayal of Raymond of Toulouse.

53 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.6.7, pp. 340(89)–341(12).

54 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XIV.2.1, p. 428(27).

55 Neocleous (2019), pp. 6–36.

56 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* X.5.10, pp. 298(70)–299(75); KONSTANTINOS VII, *On the Governance of the Empire*, ch. 13, pp. 70(104)–72(122); Kaplan (2014), pp. 156–158. See also Ch. 1, pp. 36–37.



An attack against the Turkish sultan's army near Nicaea, in which the crusaders fought like lions with endurance and won a splendid victory, inspired the sultan to recognize their irresistible bravery (*ἀκάθεκτος τόλμα*).<sup>57</sup> Raymond's construction of a siege tower at Nicaea is acknowledged as revealing great expertise,<sup>58</sup> and Alexios's order to recruit Franks who remained behind for the garrison of Nicaea points to their abilities.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, when inquiring after the circumstances of the Frankish barons' Muslim captivity and learning of its cruel conditions, the *basileus* is said to have been moved to great pity and hot tears. Anna praises their liberation by Alexios:

When the emperor learned about the defeat of the Latins at Ramel, being greatly pained at the captivity of the counts [or, more generally, barons] because he knew them to correspond to the bloom of youth, bodily strength and family reputation of the praised [heroes] of old, he could not tolerate that they remain captives in an unknown land.<sup>60</sup>

The Frankish nobles were delighted at being ransomed by the *basileus* and received in the capital with many honors, Anna continues. Having disrespected their oaths to him, they acknowledged the enormous lenience of the *basileus*. They wanted to stay at his side, but some departed in order to counteract Bohemond's malicious lies about Alexios's alleged paganism and support of pagans. Anna contradicts her usual position: these Franks were not savages, but noble men, regretting that they had erred, and far from being ungrateful and inconstant they stayed true to the *basileus*.<sup>61</sup> While illustrating Alexios's magnanimity and the falsehood of Bohemond's allegations, she equally alludes to a Byzantine-Western proximity.

A notable concern of Anna is to provide an entertaining account of the crusade. She includes anecdotes and stories, some invented, some based on

57 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.1.4–7, pp. 323(41)–325(90).

58 For Anna's appreciation of the corresponding skills of Normans, see Ch. 9, pp. 266, 268–269. For an assessment of Byzantine and Western military capabilities and technologies, see Makrypoulis (2019).

59 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.3.3, p. 330(75–78).

60 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.7.3, p. 343(69–83); see p. 343(69–73): “ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τὴν κατὰ τὸ Ῥάμελ τῶν Λατίνων ἦτταν μεμαθηκῶς, περιαλιγῆσας ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν κομήτων αἰχμαλωσίᾳ ἄτε γινώσκων αὐτοὺς κατὰ τε ὥραν καὶ ῥώμην σώματος καὶ περιφάνειαν γένους τῶν πάλαι ὕμνουμένων, οὐκ ἔφερον ἐπὶ πλεόν τούτους δορυαλώτους ἐπὶ ξένης εἶναι.”

61 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* XI.7.3, p. 343(69–83), XII.1.4–6, pp. 360(45)–361(83). See Goridis (2015), pp. 75–76.

rumors and oral tradition, to make the narrative interesting and diverse.<sup>62</sup> An example is the fight between Marianos Mavrokatalon and a Latin priest in the contingent of the count of Πρεβέντζα—probably a reference to Baldwin II of Alost.<sup>63</sup> A crossbow, whose bolt Anna says hit Marianos's helmet, is described as a novel, fearsome, and deadly weapon, perhaps pointing to the danger of the equally novel expedition as a whole. The priest is implied to be insane, fighting with endless endurance despite receiving many wounds. Anna explains this episode with differing convictions regarding the priesthood among Latins and condemns the spilling of blood by Latin priests. She does not account for the official prohibition of priests from bearing arms in the West, though in practice this prohibition was often ignored. Mocking the priest fighting Marianos as administering the sacraments and distributing God's body and blood with lance and shield, Anna relates that after Marianos gained the upper hand, the priest's companions gave in, but he fought on and started to throw stones once his quiver was depleted. Finally, the priest threw loaves of bread instead of stones, "acting like a priest and turning the battle into a sacred office and a religious service" (ὡσπερ ἱερατεύων καὶ τελετὴν τινα ποιούμενος καὶ ἱεροτελεστίαν τὸν πόλεμον). The priest's death, embracing and kissing Marianos and giving him a precious silver chalice as he expired, is deemed equally absurd.<sup>64</sup>

Reinforcing the idea of the foolishness and arrogance of the Franks is the anecdote of Hugh of Vermandois. Arrogant like Novatian,<sup>65</sup> he is said to have been proud of his noble birth, wealth, and power (εὐγενεία καὶ πλοῦτος καὶ δύναμις), sending a message full of (megalomaniac) madness (ἀπόνουα) and demanding to be received like a king of kings and the greatest of all under the sky. The detail of Hugh's envoys in golden armor is probably meant to illustrate the man's vanity in pretending to be the leader of the entire Frankish army. However, Anna explains that Hugh had lost most of his ships when crossing from southern Italy, his own ship arriving as a wreck. Unlike other leaders of the crusade, Hugh immediately agreed to swear his oath to the *basileus*, which, like the destruction of most of his military contingent, underlined the emptiness of his ridiculous boasting.<sup>66</sup>

62 On this feature of her work, which can of course be observed for many other Byzantine historical works as well, see Lilie (2014), esp. pp. 168–176.

63 Lilie (2004), p. 45.

64 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x.8.2–10, pp. 304(30)–308(53). See Buckler (1929), pp. 101–102; Reinsch (2013), pp. 226–228, Makrypoulias (2019).

65 For this proverbial expression, see ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 227, n. 191, p. 339, n. 118.

66 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x.7, pp. 301(64)–303(21). Another example of her concern to entertain is Anna's illustrative digression on the Gonatas Tower (Book XI.1.6, p. 324[59–76]).

A prominent feature of Anna's account are the historical "inaccuracies," "distortions," and "contradictions" that indicate her primary agenda.<sup>67</sup> For example, Anna rearranges the order of arrival of various leaders of the crusaders in order to emphasize the danger presented by Bohemond. This focus on Bohemond excludes almost entirely other leaders of the crusade. Notably, Stephen of Blois, Robert of Flanders, and Robert (Curthose) of Normandy, the brother of the English king, are absent from her account.<sup>68</sup> Anna was probably uninterested in whether Godfrey's contingent came to Romania by sea, as she claims, or by land, as other evidence has established. The same applies to Godfrey's assumption of the title "defender of the Holy Sepulcher," not king as the *Alexiad* relates, the assertion that he was imprisoned in Egypt, or the accession of Jerusalem's next (first) king after his death.<sup>69</sup> Anna's account and chronology of the crusaders' confrontation with Egyptian forces after the capture of Jerusalem and the liberation of noble captives from imprisonment conflicts with other source material closer to the historical events, though their faithful representation was probably unimportant for the purposes of her historiography.<sup>70</sup>

67 See above, pp. 308ff.

68 Lilie (1987), p. 90.

69 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.9.1, p. 308(54–59), xi.7.3, p. 343(76–83), xi.6.9, p. 342(43–45). See Lilie (2014), p. 180.

70 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* xi.7.1–3, pp. 342(46)–343(83). See ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Agnello, p. 222, n. 155 (p. 398).

## Imperial Propaganda versus *Kaiserkritik* in the Accounts of the Second Incursion

Intensification of contacts with the West in the long twelfth century also applied to the Holy Roman Empire. Both empires had vital interests in Hungary and, above all, Italy. They regularly exchanged embassies and influenced each other considerably in their policies and politics.<sup>1</sup> Historical works of the period reflect this to a degree. The Staufers came to power in Germany in 1138. In 1135, following a tradition reaching back to the mid-eleventh century, Ioannes II Komnenos had already negotiated an alliance with Lothair III, Holy Roman King and Emperor, against the Normans of southern Italy and its powerful ruler Roger II. After Lothair's death, Ioannes managed to renew the alliance with his successor, Conrad, the first Hohenstaufen king. A motive of Ioannes was to secure his position in the West and fulfill his ambitions in the crusader polities. A marriage alliance appeared helpful in this endeavor. As Bertha of Sulzbach's rank did not befit Manouel as *basileus* of the Romans—according to Otto of Freising, Ioannes had asked for a princess of royal blood—the marriage project was later renegotiated. In addition to an alliance, Conrad may have promised the restitution of Byzantine territories in southern Italy, but he certainly made or repeated this promise later in Thessalonike, after he returned from crusading in the Holy Land.<sup>2</sup>

Byzantine historians dealt variously with the rise of this crucial dynasty, which they represented as a threat to the empire in the second half of the twelfth century under Barbarossa and Henry VI.<sup>3</sup> Niketas Choniates remains silent, as he presumably deemed the rise of the Staufers unimportant to his narrative of imperial decline. Kinnamos, on the other hand, without going into detail, addresses the rise of the Staufers after his description of the Second Crusade and thus contextualizes the rise of Frederick I:

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- 1 For an overview, see Lamma (1955–1957); Tinnefeld (1995); Todt (2007). The popular scientific monograph by Hegele (2009) gives a distorting idea of the relations between the Komnenoi and Staufers as it contains many clichés and claims that have no basis in the sources.
  - 2 On Conrad III and his relations with Romania, see Ohnsorge (1963), pp. 364–386; Vollrath (1977); Lilie (1985); Niederkorn (1987, 2000, 2001); Todt (1988); Hiestand (1993); Gastgeber (2000); Althoff (2003); Tounta (2008a), pp. 137–138; (2011); Dendorfer (2013).
  - 3 See Ch. 12.

The king of the Alamanni, Errichos [Henry v], who had imprisoned his father [Henry iv] while he was still alive and who had beset the bishop of Rome [Pope Paschal II] with war, held office very lawlessly. On this account the Alamanni took vengeance on him: When he died, they determined not to grant the rule [over them] to his children (his sons were this Korrados and Frederikos's father), but they invited to the office a very old man, Louteres [Lothair III], and granted him supreme power over the Alamanni. But as the others [Conrad and the elder Frederick] could not endure being driven from the office belonging to their father, they determined to attempt revolts. When he perceived this, Louteres, who was really old and far gone in age, but who possessed a noble nature and did not know how to speak and act save with simplicity, agreed to pass on his office to them, when his fate overtook him. When he died soon after, although the inheritance fell to the eldest of the brothers, I mean Frederikos's father, he who had been injured in one eye chose his brother Korrados in his stead; he [Conrad] first agreed on an oath that when he died he would transfer power to the younger Frederikos. So, as stated, when Korrados was dying, he placed the crown on Frederikos.<sup>4</sup>

The passage, like so many others referring to the West and Latins, serves to illustrate the main imperial narrative and is characteristic of a generic tendency.<sup>5</sup> Kinnamos also indicates this attitude by employing the expression “approximately” (πη), implying the possibility of some inaccuracies.<sup>6</sup> One such inaccuracy is certainly the allegation that Conrad and his brother Frederick were the sons of Emperor Henry v, as Henry died childless.<sup>7</sup>

4 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 88(11)–89(7): “ὁ Ἀλαμανῶν ῥῆξ” Ἐρρίχος ἔτι περιόντα τὸν πατέρα καθείρξας τοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀρχιερέως πολέμῳ περιγεγονῶς αὐτὸς παρανομώτατα τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔσχευ. οὐδὲν ἕνεκα ἀμυνομένοι τοῦτον Ἀλαμανοί, τετελευτηκότος οὐκέτι παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ξυγχαρεῖν ἔγνωσαν (ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῶ παῖδες Κορράδος τε οὗτος καὶ ὁ Φρεδερίκου πατήρ), Λουτήρην δὲ τίνα ἀνδρᾶ ἐσχατογέροντα καλέσαντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν, τοῦτω τὴν Ἀλαμανῶν ἐπικράτησιν ἔδωσαν. ἀλλ’ ἐκείνοι οὐκ ἀνασχόμενοι εἰ τῆς πατρῴας ἐκπεσοῦνται ἀρχῆς, νεωτέροις ἐγχειρεῖν ἔγνωσαν πράγμασιν. ὁ γυνὸς ὁ Λουτήρης, γέρων μὲν καὶ ἄλλως ἀκριβῶς ὢν καὶ ἡλικίας πόρρω ἦκων, φύσει δὲ καλοκαγαθία συνῶν αἰεὶ καὶ οὐδὲν ὅ τι μὴ σὺν ἀπλότῃ καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν εἰδῶς, ὠμολόγει ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ μὲν ἀρχὴν διαβιβάσαι, ἐπειδὴ τὸ χρεῶν αὐτὸν καταλήψεται. ἐπειδὴ γοῦν ὀλίγω ὕστερον ἀπεβίω, τοῦ κλήρου ἐπὶ τὸν πρεσβύτατον τῶν ἀδελφῶν πίπτοντος, λέγω δὲ τὸν Φρεδερίκου πατέρα, αὐτὸς τὸν ἕνα πεπρωμένος τοῖν ὀφθαλμοῖν Κορράδον τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἀνθ’ ἑαυτοῦ εἶλετο, ὄρκοις ὁμολογήσαντα πρότερον ἐς Φρεδερίκον τὸν υἱέα τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐπειδὴν θνήσκει διαβιβάσαι. διὸ Κορράδος τελευτῶν, ὡσπερ ἔφη, Φρεδερίκῳ τὸ στέμμα περιετίθει.”

5 For the generic tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

6 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 89(7–8).

7 As noted also by Brand: IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 73, n. 71 (p. 243).

The main role of Conrad, the first Staufer king, in Byzantine sources is in the context of the Second Crusade, Manouel I's marriage to Eirene-Bertha, and southern Italy, which was very important to the Byzantine government at the time. These sources include Kinnamos, Choniates, and encomia, especially the poems of the so-called *Manganeios Prodromos*.<sup>8</sup>

The only precedent for the Second Crusade with such large Western armies passing through the empire was the First, the difference being that this expedition was headed by two prominent kings.<sup>9</sup>

Byzantine accounts are dominated by introspective concerns and not much suggests that the passage marks a noticeably greater deal of interest in the Latin West. The crusade is rather presented as a passing disturbance of imperial order, an event without lasting repercussions on Byzantium's relations with the West, and appears relevant only in its direct contact with Romania.<sup>10</sup>

Kinnamos's overall ambivalent account of the crusade is polemical in various instances and may reflect a propagandistic imperial source such as *Manganeios*, as do elements of Choniates's unflattering remarks about Conrad.<sup>11</sup> The crusaders serve as a foil to emphasize Emperor Manouel's virtues and his right to rule. Additionally, Kinnamos's portrayal may be influenced by the later rivalry between Frederick Barbarossa and Manouel Komnenos, and of course attempts at a favorable impression of Manouel's handling of the crusade.<sup>12</sup> The German king is targeted when Kinnamos refers to leaders of the crusade as "leaders of these barbarians" (τῶν βαρβάρων τούτων ἡγεμόνες).<sup>13</sup> He states, however, that Conrad declared himself to have no harmful intentions, that he explained to the Byzantine envoys that "he had not come for the Romans' ill" and that he was willing to give required assurances under oath. Giving credit to such declarations, of course, would have cast doubt on Manouel's alleged accomplishment, celebrated by encomiasts, of having preserved the realm against hostile invaders—Kinnamos has explicitly stated that they were insincere about their goal being Palestine and instead desired to

8 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 494–500; Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001).

9 The immediate cause of the Second Crusade was the fall of Edessa (1144). The bibliography on the Second Crusade, like the crusades more generally, is vast: see indicatively Lillie (2004); Mayer (2005); Phillips (2007); Roche and Jensen (2015).

10 For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

11 See Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 103, n. 7: "One suspects that the imperial equivalent of press releases for the period were available to all three writers [Choniates, Kinnamos, and *Manganeios*]."

12 Conca (1993), p. 116; Gallina (2013); Roche (2015).

13 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 67(19).

conquer the land of the Byzantines.<sup>14</sup> As Choniates indicates, reinforced by the fact that the alliance with Conrad survived the passage of the crusade, it ought not to be assumed that everyone bought into this propagandistic presentation of the crusade, nor that it had long-lasting negative effects on Byzantine-Western relations which remained fickle and ambivalent.<sup>15</sup>

The remark that Conrad held the principal rank among the peoples of the West (τὰ πρεσβεία τῶν ἀνὰ τὴν ἐσπερίαν λήξιν λαχῶν ἐθνῶν) may be interpreted as a reference to his imperial claim.<sup>16</sup> These imperial pretensions were likely relevant for the Byzantines mainly in a diplomatic and ideological context,<sup>17</sup> which they distinguished without hesitation from *realpolitik*.

Staufer claims, on which Conrad insisted,<sup>18</sup> were perceived as a threat as the crusader army entered the empire and approached Constantinople. In addition, the ideology of crusading monarchs such as Conrad and Louis VII incorporated the concept of the last, messianic emperor, thus challenging similar Byzantine concepts attributed to the *basileus*. Magdalino thinks that it is legitimate to assume that at least certain Byzantines had this in mind in interactions with this and other crusades.<sup>19</sup> A letter of Ioannes Tzetzes refers to fears during the passage of the crusade that prophecies concerning the fall of Constantinople were about to come true.<sup>20</sup> This expression of fear of the crusaders' army, unflattering imagery and hostile assertions have been used as a basis for postulating negative Byzantine attitudes toward the crusaders and Westerners in general. Such assumptions are not just misleading because of the propagandistic context of the Greek sources, but also under the consideration that any passage of a large army was bound to raise concern.<sup>21</sup> Old prophecies of the capture of the imperial city were revived in the context of the crusade, but it remains an open question how widespread they were and how seriously they were taken.<sup>22</sup>

14 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 67(3–10); see Roche (2015), p. 199.

15 See below, p. 337.

16 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 68(12–16).

17 In one of the letters of MICHAEL ITALIKOS, *Works*, no. 38, p. 227(5), for instance, which was possibly written in ca. 1138, the Byzantine ecumene is said to extend over Ἀλαμανία as well.

18 See Kresten (2000), pp. 133–135, on Conrad's use of the title *Romanorum imperator Augustus* and his address of Manouel as *rex Graecorum*.

19 Magdalino (2007a), p. 52.

20 IOANNES TZETZES, *Letters*, no. 59, pp. 87–88; Mavroudi (2006), p. 79; Roche (2015), p. 198.

21 Roche (2015), p. 213.

22 Magdalino (2005), pp. 50–51.

This sense of threat associated with the passage of an army headed by a rival through Byzantium was probably exploited by the imperial propagandist Manganeios, who congratulated Manouel on having proven to the rulers of Old Rome the superiority of New Rome.<sup>23</sup> As long as the rival claimant was distant, his claims were irrelevant, but now it was a more delicate matter. His presence raised questions concerning how the two rulers should interact in the event of a meeting, which they appear to have avoided. Only after Conrad suffered a severe setback against the Turks in Asia Minor would it come to pass.<sup>24</sup>

Kinnamos addresses Western hierarchy and feudal organization in this context, explaining that emperor (*basileus*) was the highest rank in the West before king (ῥήξ), duke (*doux*), and count (κόμης). Kinnamos also refers to the term used by Westerners for emperor: ἱμπεράτωρ. According to their system of rank, “the inferior naturally yields to the superior, supports him in war, and obeys in such matters.”<sup>25</sup> This is a rare occasion of a Byzantine literatus quoting a Latin term rather than translating it into Greek.<sup>26</sup> This rarity reflects a stance of political and cultural superiority in Byzantine literature.<sup>27</sup>

Kinnamos continues in a propagandistic vein, accusing Conrad of having paid no heed to the lawless and forcible seizure of goods by his troops.<sup>28</sup> This portrayal of Conrad may well be the product of contemporary Byzantine propaganda, although Kinnamos’s allegations regarding the pillaging of the king’s troops is corroborated by Odo of Deuil.<sup>29</sup> In any case, it was of little consequence to Kinnamos, as his historiographical work is situated in the context of the alliance with France and Byzantium’s opposition to Frederick Barbarossa in the late 1170s and early 1180s, with the purpose of celebrating Manouel’s successes and casting events of his reign in a favorable light.<sup>30</sup> Kinnamos refers to Conrad again when he reports the catastrophic flood at Choïrobakchoi.<sup>31</sup> While both Western and Byzantine accounts associate this event with divine retribution, the propagandistic Poem 20 of Manganeios connects it to Conrad’s arrogant attitude, for which he was punished by God and reduced to trembling

23 Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 103.

24 Görlich (2013), p. 74.

25 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 68(18)–69(6); see p. 69(1–3): “καὶ ὑπέκει τὸ καταδεέστερον αἰεὶ φύσει τῷ ἐπέκεινα, πόλεμόν τε συνδιαφέρει τούτῳ καὶ πείθεται τὰ γε τοιαῦτα.”

26 The term ῥήξ (“king”) was considered a Greek term: see Conca (1993), p. 103.

27 On this passage, see also Conca (1993), pp. 102–104.

28 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 71(2–5).

29 Roche (2015), pp. 188–189.

30 Gallina (2013), pp. 122–128.

31 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 73(18)–74(10).



fear.<sup>32</sup> In Manganeios's poems, Conrad is extremely hostile and intends to occupy Constantinople and impose Latin religious customs, which are described as erroneous and Judaizing because of the use of unleavened bread. He is presented as untrustworthy and of taking no account of God while on a religious mission. Manganeios compares him to various beasts, as well as to the wicked pharaoh of the Old Testament and other negative figures.<sup>33</sup> These poems and Kinnamos aimed at glorifying an emperor who, supported by God, defended his people against dangerous intruders. Eustathios's later orations that reference the Second Crusade follow similar lines.<sup>34</sup> The young emperor Manouel needed to strengthen his position against potential rivals in this early phase of his reign. The crusade presented an opportunity to strengthen his prestige and the legitimacy of his rule, especially against his elder brother Isaakios.<sup>35</sup> Even decades after the crusade, Manouel's encomiasts still praised him for having averted this great danger and prevented its repetition. Hence also the hyperbolic "estimates" given of the number of crusaders, described as too numerous to count, in Kinnamos, Choniates, and imperial panegyric.<sup>36</sup>

In the subsequent narrative, Kinnamos draws a stark contrast between Manouel and Conrad. The emperor, compassionate and (by implication) wise, sent envoys to console the king of the "Alamanni" and invited him to deliberate on the further course of action. Conrad, however, was still—after the incident at Choïrobakchoi—unwilling to abandon his arrogance (εἰσέτι μηδαμῆ καθυφεῖναι θέλων τοῦ γαύρου) and demanded that the emperor meet him on his way to the capital. From the perspective of the Byzantine *basileus*, it was appropriate that Conrad come to him in the imperial city, where he would be received honorably but his inferior rank would be made evident, as there could be no equal to the emperor of the Romans. Kinnamos comments that Manouel perceived Conrad's pretension (ἀλαζονεία) as limitless, and—for the time being—overlooked what else he had to say.<sup>37</sup> This allusion to Conrad's emphasis on his imperial claim reflects the later rivalry with Barbarossa.

The implication of the following alleged occurrence is that it was an appropriate lesson for the pretentious and foolish king—there is no convincing evidence that Conrad attempted to besiege Constantinople or even contemplated

32 Jeffrey and Jeffrey (2001), p. 109, n. 38; see also below for Choniates's account.

33 Jeffrey and Jeffrey (2001), pp. 108–113.

34 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, Orations, no. 13, § 9–10, no. 16, § 10.

35 See also Conca (1993), p. 109; Magdalino (1993b), p. 450; Jeffrey and Jeffrey (2001), p. 105; Roche (2015).

36 Magdalino (1993b), p. 459; Zorzi (2012), p. 117; Roche (2015), p. 198.

37 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 74(10–18). See also Conca (1993), pp. 104–105.

a siege.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, Kinnamos affirms that Conrad, having marched to Philopation, observed Constantinople's impressive walls with the intention of assessing whether a siege would be practicable. He relates that its enormous size and the height of the towers greatly astonished the German king, and thus convinced him that the city was impregnable, "which was true."<sup>39</sup>

The next station on Conrad's march was Pikridion, from where Conrad sent a letter to the emperor, "which was really not far from extreme conceit" (οὐ πόρρω θρύψεως ὄντας πολλῆς)—clearly implying that Conrad remained a stubborn fool. In the letter, Conrad asked Manouel to excuse incidents on the march and not to blame him, maintaining that it was common for incidents to occur when a large army was far from home.<sup>40</sup> As for the question of authenticity, the documents and letters that Kinnamos professes to quote are generally not complete fiction, but are strongly adapted for the purposes of the narrative, as observed by Kresten. With regards to their form, they differ greatly from the originals and occasionally alter the sense, as Kinnamos consciously took liberties.<sup>41</sup>

The emperor found the arguments ridiculous, referring to his leniency in dealing with the atrocities of Conrad's troops, and mocking Conrad's excuses.<sup>42</sup> After a Byzantine victory, which aimed at teaching the arrogant Conrad a lesson, Kinnamos adds, the king's insolence persisted (σοβαρὸς ἔτι καθήστο) as he had not yet heard of the defeat. Manouel continued to mock him for his previous arrogance (ὑπεροψία) and informed him of the victory of the Byzantine army, which he portrayed as to be expected: "The native and local [army] is as a rule apt to be superior to strangers coming to an unfamiliar land."<sup>43</sup> He added that he had allowed his troops "to be swept along by their own volition" (οἷς καθάπαξ πρὸς γνώμην ἐνέδομεν φέρεσθαι τὴν αὐτῶν) and could not chastise them for it. He concluded: "If it seems right to you, we must hold back both sides with official rein and restrain the soldiers' impulses."<sup>44</sup>

38 Roche (2015), pp. 200–202.

39 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 74(11)–75(13).

40 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 75(13)–76(15). For Manganeios's wordplay with the name Pikridion, which is part of the defaming of Conrad in Poem 20, see Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 113.

41 Conca (1993), p. 111; Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1360; Kresten (1997), pp. 39–44.

42 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 76(15)–77(10).

43 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 77(10)–78(16); see p. 78(14–16): "τὸ γὰρ αὐτόχθον και ἐγχώριον ἐπικρατέστερον ὡς ἐπίπαν τῶν ἐπηλύδων και ξένων φιλεῖ γίνεσθαι."

44 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 78(16–21); see p. 78(18–20): "εἰ τοίνυν και αὐτό σοι δοκεῖ, ἀνθεκτέον και πάλιν ἡνίας ἀμφοτέρους τῆς ἀρχικῆς και ἀνασειραστέον τοῖς στρατεύμασι τὰς ὀρμάς."

As not yet having been told of the defeat, Conrad did not take the emperor's message seriously and demanded imperial ships so he could cross immediately, threatening to encompass the city with his large army. "Unwilling to answer the braggart without sarcasm" (οὐκέτι μέχρις εἰρωνείας τὸν ἀλαζόνα ἀμείβεσθαι ἤθελεν), Manouel chose bitter words. He commented that superior numbers would not benefit Conrad, stressing the advantage of superior Byzantine soldiers fighting in their native land. He referred to the glorious past of the Roman army: "Consider that they possess this country whose ancestors passed through the whole earth with arms, and became masters of yourselves and every other people under the sun."<sup>45</sup> This, an allusion to the imperial encomiast Kinnamos's ecumenical imperial ideology, is in contrast with Hohenstaufen claims. Finally, Manouel admonished Conrad to be more prudent and cooperative if he wanted to reach the Holy Land, (re)affirming Byzantine rights to any land conquered from the Turks in Asia Minor: "What we have not endured our own people demanding [i.e., attack Conrad's army], we now risk doing at once by your urging."<sup>46</sup> Kinnamos thus justifies the use of Byzantine force.<sup>47</sup> The major clash recorded by Kinnamos, in the mold of Manganeios, likely was no more than a skirmish—unmentioned in Western sources—but was a means for the historiographer to put Manouel and his imperial virtues on display by contrasting them with Conrad's vices.<sup>48</sup>

When Conrad received this message and heard of the defeat, he determined to cross the strait to Damalis, "because a certain barbaric heedlessness drove the man. For in prosperity the barbarian is likely to be exalted and boast beyond measure, but in disaster he is downcast more than is suitable and is immoderately humbled."<sup>49</sup> With this short typology of the barbarian, Kinnamos plausibly intended to demonstrate his knowledge of ancient literary

45 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 78(22)–79(21); see p. 79(18–21): "ἐννόησον ὡς ἐκείνοι τὴν χώραν κατέχουσι ταύτην, ὧν οἱ πρόγονοι πάσαν τὴν γῆν περιήλθον τοῖς ὅπλοις, ὑμῶν τε αὐτῶν καὶ λοιπῶν ἀπάντων τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ ἐκυρίευσαν ἔθνῶν." On parallels with Prokopios, with whose works Kinnamos was familiar, see Conca (1993), pp. 112–113.

46 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 79(21)–80(9); see p. 80(7–9): "ἐννόησον ὡς ἐκείνοι τὴν χώραν κατέχουσι ταύτην, ὧν οἱ πρόγονοι πάσαν τὴν γῆν περιήλθον τοῖς ὅπλοις, ὑμῶν τε αὐτῶν καὶ λοιπῶν ἀπάντων τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ ἐκυρίευσαν ἔθνῶν."

47 Gallina (2013), p. 122.

48 Roche (2015), pp. 200–202, 207–210.

49 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 80(9–16); see p. 80(13–16): "ὀλιγωρίας τινὸς βαρβαρικῆς ἐπειγούσης τὸν ἄνθρωπον. φιλεῖ γὰρ τὸ βάρβαρον εὐημεροῦν μὲν ὑπὲρ μέτρον ἐπαίρεσθαι καὶ αὐχεῖν, δυστυχοῦν δὲ καταβάλλεσθαι τε πλέον ἢ προσήκει καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι παρὰ τὸ μέτριον." The allegation that he crossed in a "wretched skiff" (see p. 80[10]: λεμβάδιον λυπρόν) instead of a splendid imperial ship is an integral part of Conrad's further humiliation and ridicule, on which see Conca (1993), p. 114.

models and *topoi*.<sup>50</sup> According to the historian, another lesson apparently had to be taught. To humiliate him further, Manouel bribed many of Conrad's soldiers to withhold their allegiance, which caused him to be no longer "the previous supercilious fellow" (ὁ πρῶην ὑπέροφρος). Manouel sent an envoy to fulfill his request for guides to lead the army through Asia Minor and even proposed an alliance, including a common offensive against the Turks. Conrad, still foolish, refused this offer after consultation with his entourage, and marched on to Philomelion.<sup>51</sup>

Subsequently, his troops suffered a serious defeat against the Turks, but Kinnamos is willing to commend him in this instance, stating that he was courageous in warfare (θαρσαλέος τὰ πολέμια), rushing against the "Persians" (Turks). He lost his horse and came close to being captured by the "barbarians."<sup>52</sup> As is usual in the historiography of the time, Conrad, who was previously named a barbarian, is not so termed when fighting against infidels. Military prowess is a positive attribute of Latins in Byzantine literature, as it was represented as a virtue by the Byzantines themselves. However, another interpretation is possible: the adjective *θαρσαλέος* can be translated as "overbold" or "audacious."<sup>53</sup> That the fall from his horse and his defeat immediately follow this remark suggests that Conrad's overboldness, which contrasts with Byzantine approaches to warfare, is a further expression of his foolish hubris. Another implication is that the defeat was a result of his refusal to cooperate with the prudent Manouel.

Kinnamos next addresses the passage of the "German" (i.e., French) troops, describing them in more favorable terms and asserting that their king (Louis VII) had learned from Conrad's example—a statement likely influenced by the political constellation at the time he composed his historiography.<sup>54</sup> The French army is declared to have been in better condition and superior in strength and tactics, also due to their cavalry. In this context, a saying is brought up: "budge, Alamann" (πούτζη Ἀλαμανέ).<sup>55</sup> This is another passage that serves to illustrate the imperial narrative, but also points to rivalries between Louis VII and Conrad III and their armies, confirmed by Western sources. In Asia Minor, the French contingent united with that of the Germans. However, after having reached Philadelpheia (other evidence has established that it

50 Spadaro (2000).

51 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 80(16)–81(9).

52 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 81(10)–82(4).

53 Liddell, Scott, Jones, and McKenzie (2011), p. 784, sub *θαρσαλέος*.

54 See below, pp. 335–336.

55 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 82(5)–85(10). See Görich (2011b), pp. 46–47.

was Ephesos),<sup>56</sup> Conrad was no longer able to endure being slighted by the French—an allusion to rivalry that predated the crusade<sup>57</sup>—and was determined to return.<sup>58</sup>

In the subsequent narrative, Kinnamos adopts a more charitable, sympathetic view, pointing to common markers of identity, and has Manouel appear more magnanimous, but also like a prudent ruler acting in the empire's interest:

As he desired to separate the kings from each other, and sympathized with the man [Conrad], he replied thus [...]: '[...] when you were prospering we decided not to treat you beyond your worth, and now that you are in a moderately bad situation, we do not hesitate to welcome you back with those same things which we were eager to do in honor of a relative, the ruler of such peoples, and to take counsel together regarding the present circumstances, on account of the said [reasons] as well as of being of the same religion.<sup>59</sup>

Manouel forgave all occurrences of the past and invited Conrad to come to Constantinople, to make new plans and seize new opportunities, citing their alliance, kinship, and common religion. The German king, Kinnamos states, received this reply with pleasure and quickly returned, meeting the emperor in Thrace and proceeding to the capital with him (winter 1147–48). There, he was splendidly entertained, and “his exhausted body recuperated.”<sup>60</sup> This is an allusion to Conrad's illness, to which Kinnamos does not explicitly refer, perhaps choosing to mock Conrad further, preferring his being slighted by the French as an explanation for his return, and perhaps also because Manouel's medical knowledge and role as a doctor is covered elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> Kinnamos implies that Manouel's superiority was made manifest to Conrad through the demonstrations of imperial grandeur in the capital. The expression of hierarchy by means

56 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 70, n. 67 (p. 242).

57 Görich (2011b). The implication is, of course, that he could not endure French insults because he was exceedingly arrogant, as Kinnamos has stated repeatedly.

58 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 84(8)–85(13).

59 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 85(13–23): “ὁ δὲ τὸ μὲν ἀπονοσφίζειν ἀλλήλων τοὺς ῥήγας ἐθέλων, τὸ δὲ καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ συναλγῶν, ἐπέστειλε τοιάδε [...] οὐτε τοίνυν εὐθηνουμένῳ σοι ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν προσφέρεισθαι ἔγνωμεν, καὶ νῦν γε μετρίως δυσπραγήσαντα τοῖς αὐτοῖς καὶ πάλιν σε δεξιούσθαι οὐκ οὐκ ὀκνήσομεν, οἷς καὶ τὸ πρότερον ὅσα καὶ ξυγγενῆ καὶ τηλικούτων ἐθνῶν ἄρχοντα τιμᾶν ἡμῖν μὲν διὰ σπουδῆς ἦν, ξυμβουλεύειν τε τὰ παριστάμενα, τῶν εἰρημένων τε ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ ὁμοθρήσκους ἡμᾶς ἀλλήλοις εἶναι.”

60 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 86(10–21).

61 See Ch. 15, p. 432.

of imperial display and ritual can be observed for numerous such meetings, particularly during Manouel's reign.<sup>62</sup> Manouel's generosity is further underlined by his having funded Conrad's passage to Palestine by ship. In the Holy Land, the king "performed appropriate rites at the life-giving tomb of Christ" (τὰ εἰκότα ἐπὶ τῷ ζωοδόχῳ Χριστοῦ τελέσας τάφῳ).<sup>63</sup>

This is another reference to the common Christianity of Latins and Byzantines in Greek literature, like Manouel's message to Conrad in Asia Minor in which the emperor invokes their common religion, which also explains why the barbarian label is assigned to Muslims when they fight against Latin armies.<sup>64</sup>

The failed campaign against Damascus is not mentioned by either Kinnamos or Choniates, demonstrating again the degree to which their narratives are centered on Byzantium. The historians were able to obtain information about Conrad's military activities in the Holy Land; they simply considered them irrelevant to their narrative, even though the outcome of the Second Crusade was far from being so politically for Byzantium. Some of the Latins returned home directly, while Conrad sailed to Thessalonike, where he renewed his alliance with Manouel.<sup>65</sup>

Kinnamos's final mention of Conrad occurs when he relates Manouel's dealings with Hungary in which the ruler of the Czechs, i.e., Vladislaus II of Bohemia, was implicated. It serves to introduce a digression denouncing the usurpation of imperial privileges by the pope and the Western emperor. Vladislaus accompanied Conrad to Palestine and was later unlawfully made king by him, "yet both were deceived, the one who granted the title, the other who gave thanks," for the German king had no right to grant such a title and usurp imperial privilege.<sup>66</sup> Vladislaus II of Bohemia did accompany Conrad on the crusade, but it was from Conrad's successor Frederick (r. 1152–90) that he received the crown in 1158.<sup>67</sup> This information was hardly important to

62 See Magdalino (1993b), p. 242–243; Anca (2010); also Ch. 15, pp. 427, 430–432, 437–439.

63 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 86(21)–87(2).

64 For the relevance of ideas of Christian fraternity during the Second Crusade, see Neocleous (2019), esp. pp. 51–58.

65 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 72(80–81), only mentions that they marched toward Jerusalem. For Kinnamos's portrayal of the agreements concluded in Thessalonike, see Ch. 15, p. 414.

66 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 218(6–13); see p. 218(12–13): "καίτοι ἐψεύσαντο ἄμφω, ὁ μὲν τὴν κλήσιν, ἄτερος δὲ τὴν χάριν ὁ διδούς." On Vladislaus's participation in the Second Crusade, see also p. 223(7–8); Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1358b.

67 See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 70, n. 65 (p. 242).

Kinnamos;<sup>68</sup> crucially, however, ecumenical imperial claims were important, first and foremost in an ideological context, and did not prevent imperial policy from being carried out in a pragmatic way.<sup>69</sup>

Choniates, half a century after the events in question and after the fall of Manouel's dynasty, reveals different orientations and interests in his account of the crusade. It is marked by *Kaiserkritik* rather than panegyric motivations, although, like the *Historia* more generally, it is influenced by encomiastic source material. Unlike Kinnamos and perhaps aiming at vainglorious assertions in his sources, he indicates that the crusaders did not intend to bring harm to Romania and were not insincere regarding their goal being the Holy Land. He even maintains that they did not deem it necessary to fortify their encampments because they trusted in the guarantees that the emperor had made for their passage.<sup>70</sup> Like Kinnamos, however, Choniates's reliability is questionable regarding the reconstruction of events when confronted with other evidence, especially regarding Asia Minor. This, as with comparable cases, is not due to an inability to provide information but indicates rather that his historiographical concerns lay elsewhere.<sup>71</sup> Like Kinnamos, the younger historian introduces the German king abruptly, as he does the crusade itself.<sup>72</sup>

The encounter between Conrad and Michael Italikos, the metropolitan of Philippoupolis, draws a contrast between an illiterate barbarian, with no knowledge of Greek, and a fellow literatus, who displayed a high level of *euglōttia* and *asteiōtēs*.<sup>73</sup> Michael Italikos, whom Choniates describes as highly educated and eloquent, is said to have charmed the king of the "Alamanni" and avoided any quarrels. "Thus he [Italikos] had this arrogant fellow [Conrad] hung by the ears, just like amphorae are held by their handles" (ὡς ἐκ τῶν ὠτων ἀναρτῆσαι κατὰ τοὺς τῶν ἀμφορέων διακένοους τὸν ὑψηλόφρονα). The king also visited the metropolitan in his house, became a companion at his table and exchanged toasts with him. A direct result of the persuasive skills of the metropolitan was

68 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 84(10–12). Using the adverb δῆθεν ("supposedly"), he is ready to admit not to have investigated thoroughly the Bohemian ruler's elevation to the rank of king.

69 Ohnsorge (1963), pp. 420–421, stresses Manouel's pragmatism and flexibility regarding the issue of the imperial title, practicing οἰκονομία in his dealings with Conrad. See also Lilie (1985); Cheynet (2006), p. 77; Kolia-Dermizaki (2014); Hehl (2020), esp. section 11.

70 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 60(45)–61(64), 64(56–59); Roche (2015), pp. 198–200. For Choniates's use of encomiastic sources, see also Simpson (2013), pp. 229–242.

71 Roche (2008).

72 Zorzi (2012), p. 111.

73 See Magdalino (2003), p. 51, who hypothesizes that Italikos "may have known Latin"; Grünbart (2019), p. 31.

the following: “to please him, [Conrad] punished with great rigor all those who, wherever it was, took food without paying for it.”<sup>74</sup> Choniates does not say how they communicated but, if this story indeed reflects a historical occurrence, presumably it was with the help of an interpreter.

The peaceful relations were then disturbed by the murder of one of Conrad’s relatives in a monastery in Adrianople. The king’s name (Κορράδος) is given for the first time in passing on this occasion by Choniates. The episode centers on Frederick, Conrad’s nephew, whose enraged reaction is emphasized. How Conrad himself reacted is not stated, only that he ordered Frederick to take revenge, which his nephew was over-eager to do.<sup>75</sup>

Choniates’s description of the flood at Choïrobakchoi does not so much reflect the personal viewpoint of the author, but rather the perspective of his sources, which may be Poems 20 and 24 of Manganeios or similar propagandistic work.<sup>76</sup> Its effect on the leader of the “Alamanni” is described thus: “The king was greatly afflicted by this occurrence and he tempered somewhat his haughty behavior. He wondered if even the elements obeyed the Romans and if the seasons in their land, when they required it, changed their duties like maidservants.”<sup>77</sup>

Characteristic of Choniates’s usual critical assessment of Byzantine history, however, he states that the flooding the crusaders fell victim to was a natural and regular occurrence and not a sign of divine favor bestowed upon the Byzantines.<sup>78</sup>

On subsequent events, Choniates is much briefer than Kinnamos, presumably because the encomiastic historian made use of events surrounding the passage of the German ruler’s troops to Asia Minor to sharpen the contrast between Manouel and the Staufers. Here too, similar to Kinnamos, Choniates reflects the imperial propaganda of the time. Conrad is described as persistent

74 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 62(11)–63(22); see p. 63(21–22): “ὅς καὶ μετῆι ὠμοτάτως, αὐτῷ χαριζόμενος, τοὺς ἄνευ καταθέσεως ἀργυρίου τὰ σίτα ὀθενοῦν παρεισάγοντας.” On the looting of the crusaders during the passage of the Second Crusade, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 147, n. 76 (p. 565); Zorzi (2012), p. 115. On Choniates’s presumably oral sources for the description of Michael Italikos’s role, see Zorzi (2012), p. 114.

75 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 63(23)–64(53). For the characterization of Frederick Barbarossa in Byzantine literature, see the first section of Ch. 12 and section 7 of Ch. 15.

76 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 64(56)–65(89).

77 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 65(89–93): “ὁ δὲ γε ῥῆξ κατῶδυνος ἐπὶ τῷ συμβάντι τούτῳ γενόμενος, καθυφαίς δὲ τι καὶ τοῦ κόμπου καὶ θαυμάσας, εἰ καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα Ῥωμαίοις ὑπέικουσι καὶ θελήσασι μόνον ὑπενδιδόασι καὶ αἱ ὦραι παρὰ τούτοις ὅσα καὶ ὑπὴρέτιδες δεῖσαν τὰ ἀλλήλων ἀντιπαρέχουσιν, ἄρας ἐκείθεν διεπορεύετο.”

78 Roche (2015), pp. 196–197.



in his haughty attitude, until he was forced to cross the sea to Asia Minor. In congruence with the tendency of Byzantine historiography to cite omens to validate the significance of certain events, the crossing is commented on as follows: “Thus, to the great relief of the Romans, like an ill-omened and frightening heavenly body, the king crossed over to the east.”<sup>79</sup>

Subsequently, Choniates addresses the crusade of the French contingent and then recounts the war against King Roger of Sicily, which contains his final reference to Conrad. According to the historian, it was rumored (at the time?) that Roger’s attack on the empire was coordinated with the German ruler’s campaign.<sup>80</sup> This was probably no more than a rumor; sources on the Second Crusade indicate that the Sicilian Normans offered the French a common offensive against Byzantium, which they refused, and suggest that nothing of the sort was contemplated by Conrad, even if, as in the entourage of the French king, some might have sympathized with such a plan. The remark does show that collusion might have been suspected at the time, even if there was none. Imperial propaganda could make use of such rumors to strengthen the *basileus*’s standing in Byzantine politics by insisting, implicitly and explicitly, that faithful allegiance to the emperor alone could avert such a threat. Moreover, the statement was possibly inspired by later rivalry between Manouel and Frederick I.<sup>81</sup>

It is notable that Kinnamos is silent on the difficulties with the crusade of the French (called Γερμανοί) reported by other sources. A plausible reason for this omission is that the French king Louis VII was a relative of Empress Maria-Xene and the father of Alexios II’s bride Anna-Agnes. Manouel’s marriage to Maria, her regency, and Anna-Agnes’s arrival in Romania coincided with the presumed time of composition of Kinnamos’s work.<sup>82</sup> Political circumstances thus influenced his portrayal of the French crusade, a portrayal that accordingly points more to friendly relations and common markers of identity.

79 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 65(94)–66(11); see p. 66(10–11): “Οὕτως τοίνυν ἀγαπητῶς τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ὡσεὶ τινοῦ οὐρανόυ δειμάτος ἀπαισίου τοῦ ῥηγῶς εἰς τὴν ἑῶαν λῆξιν διαβάντος.”

80 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 72(90–93).

81 Zorzi (2012), pp. 128–129. For the difficulties with the French crusade and later French plans to organize a crusading expedition against Romania, see Lilie (1993b), pp. 261–263; Neocleous (2019), pp. 51–65. Such plans never materialized, however, due to the opposition of the French magnates and Conrad III. Everything indicates that most of the French crusaders during the passage of the Second Crusade had an unfavorable attitude toward the idea of turning the crusade against the Byzantines. See also Phillips (2019), pp. 113–114.

82 Gallina (2013), p. 128. See also section 4 of Ch. 3 on the alliance with France and Anna-Agnes.

The French king cooperated smoothly with Manouel, Kinnamos maintains, either out of his natural inclination or in consideration of Conrad's fate. The comment shows that it was not uncommon for a Byzantine historiographer to credit a Latin with good character. A concern for imperial superiority is a factor as well, expressed in the lower chair offered to Louis as well as the relics that Louis was shown, which drew attention to the Christian ties between the rulers.<sup>83</sup> The king gave an oath to remain the emperor's ally and friend (*φίλος*) for the rest of his life, implying subordination. Like Eustathios, Kinnamos made clear that the Byzantine-French alliance through Anna-Agnes was anything but a union between equals. The brief account of the French crusade concludes with a passage about a naval battle between a Sicilian and a Byzantine fleet in which Louis is said to have become entangled. Fortunately for him, he was not harmed and the losses he suffered were generously compensated by the *basileus*, another indication of Manouel's imperial magnanimity.<sup>84</sup>

It is indicative of Choniates's generic outlook on the crusade, and non-Byzantine cultures more generally, that he does not really introduce the French and gives the impression that what he recounts of the French pertains to the Germans as well.<sup>85</sup>

An allusion relates to the women, among them King Louis VII's wife Eleanor, who, accompanying the French crusade and riding on horseback like men, were "becoming more masculine than the Amazons" (*ὕπερ τὰς Ἀμαζόνας ἠρρέωντο*). While fanciful and partly historically inaccurate, the description points to differing attitudes toward the role of women in society and female modesty.<sup>86</sup>

Choniates has Louis, who could easily be mistaken for Conrad from the *Historia's* account, give an interesting speech to his men before a battle against the Turks. It contains Christian references and addresses the struggles and sacrifices of the crusaders for their cause, having left their loved ones and homes behind. The reference to the nobility of the leaders (*eugeneis*) is noteworthy. As in other instances, Muslims are referred to as barbarians while Latins are not, both in the speech and the battle description that follows. The idea of

83 The same approach was applied to Conrad when he stayed in Constantinople, see above.

84 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 82(5)–83(13), 87(12)–88(6).

85 For the following discussion, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 66(10)–71(76). On Choniates's introspective outlook in this instance, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 155, n. 91 (pp. 567–568); Zorzi (2012), p. 121; for the generic tendency of Byzantine literature more generally, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

86 Koutrakou (2015), p. 51; Grünbart (2016a), pp. 113–114; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 129, n. 65 (p. 554), with further references.

martyrdom in battle and the spiritual reward for fighting the infidel also figures in the speech.<sup>87</sup> Choniates has the king censure Byzantine slackness in combating the Turks, a criticism the historian also makes elsewhere.<sup>88</sup> Courage and determination are said to have helped Louis's army win a splendid victory, the bones of the fallen Turks forming entire hills—the implication being that this should serve the Byzantines as an example to emulate.<sup>89</sup>

Significantly, the crusaders are also described as “of the same faith” (ὁμόπιστοι) and worthy of humane treatment. This is yet another of the numerous references to Christian fraternity in Byzantine as well as Western sources.<sup>90</sup>

The most crucial aspect of Choniates's account, however, is his criticism of Emperor Manouel's handling of the crusade, although it reveals more about the historian's agenda of scolding fellow Byzantines for their vices, which brought about Romania's decline, than what may or may not have happened.<sup>91</sup>

Manouel is said to have encouraged the Turks to attack the crusaders, and he and the Byzantines more generally are censured for their inhumanity in withholding decent food from the crusaders while cheating and harming them. Choniates thus identifies a symptom of immorality and corruption in his fellow Byzantines, leading to the misfortunes suffered after Manouel's time. The historian's censure ignores that the Byzantines had reason to be suspicious of the intentions of the French leaders, fueled notably by negotiations with Roger II which could have resulted in a joint attack on Romania. In addition, Greek and non-Greek evidence attests to the relative poverty of Byzantine Asia Minor at the time, which made it difficult to provide sufficient supplies. Finally, Manouel and his advisers may have seen an advantage in depriving the crusader polities of support, making them depend more strongly on Byzantium. Damage to his relations with the West resulting from the crusade could be repaired over time, as Manouel's later dealings with Latin powers strongly suggest.<sup>92</sup> In the meantime, he could rely on the alliance with Conrad as a security. The descriptions

87 Stouraitis (2011), pp. 35–49; Zorzi (2012), p. 122. See also the remarks about Byzantine attitudes toward “Holy War” at the beginning of Ch. 10, p. 308.

88 See Ch. 15, pp. 445–446.

89 See Grünbart (2019), pp. 43–44, who identifies mountains of corpses and bones as an element of the narratives of the crusades in Asia Minor, a parallel is ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. x.6.4, pp. 300(31)–301(40).

90 Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), p. 190; Neocleous (2019).

91 See the discussion in Roche (2008).

92 Moreover, the project of an expedition against Romania, conceived for various reasons in the aftermath of the Second Crusade, did not attract much support and it did not involve a rejection of the Christian status of the Byzantines, on which see Neocleous (2019), pp. 64–65.

of the crusaders as hostile and dangerous in imperial propaganda may also have caused mistreatment on the part of Byzantines. As shown, in any case, this propaganda had the purpose and benefit of strengthening the support of Manouel's subjects in the Komnenian political order. It is not without reason that it continued for decades.<sup>93</sup> Choniates may have been aware of this, as his contradiction of imperial panegyric indicates, but explicating such concerns of the imperial government or other Byzantines in the 1140s was hardly part of his agenda.

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93 Lilie (1993b), esp. ch. 3 and pp. 158–163; (2004), esp. ch. 3; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 51–52; Harris (2014), pp. 102–109.

## The Staufers as a Rivaling Threat and a Model to Byzantine Emperors

### 1 Frederikos (Frederick Barbarossa)

The high point of Komenian-Stauffer rivalry was reached under Frederick Barbarossa (1152–90), which is reflected in the histories of both Kinnamos and Choniates, but also in various other contemporary Byzantine literary works. Frederick, duke of Swabia, accompanied his uncle Conrad on the Second Crusade, where he encountered Byzantines and visited Constantinople and Thessalonike. A few years later, he succeeded to the German throne. In the early phase of Frederick's rule, Manouel tried to win him over to an alliance on terms similar to those reached with his uncle. A planned joint invasion of Italy had been prevented by Conrad's death in early 1152, though he probably did not intend to allow a Byzantine reconquest of parts of Italy. Now, Barbarossa was unwilling to concede *any* land to the Byzantines in Italy, a policy which he maintained until the end of his reign, although he employed a Byzantine desire to regain control of parts of Italy as a diplomatic tool. He did, after all, recognize the importance of functional relations with the eastern empire. A marriage project failed following Manouel's unsuccessful campaign against the southern Italian Normans in 1155–56. In the papal schism of 1159–77, Manouel sided with Pope Alexander III, which limited diplomatic contacts during the 1160s. Manouel now successfully funded Barbarossa's adversaries in Italy. After a final attempt to form an alliance with Barbarossa in 1170–74, Manouel turned to France and Montferrat instead, continuing the fight against Barbarossa in Italy through his allies. From Manouel's death until the Third Crusade, however, the attention of the Byzantine government shifted to other concerns due to conflicts and power struggles within the empire.

In 1184, Constance, heiress to the crown of Sicily, was betrothed to Frederick's son Henry. The prospect of a union between Sicily and the Holy Roman Empire was of course unwelcome to the Byzantines. A second direct encounter with Barbarossa took place as a result of the emperor's participation in the Third Crusade. As the sea route was deemed too dangerous,

he chose the route through Byzantine territory established by the First Crusade.<sup>1</sup>

Frederick is introduced into the narrative by both Kinnamos and Choniates in the context of the Second Crusade. In the description of the crusade, he does not play much of a direct role, except in one instance.<sup>2</sup> Both historians recount that a relative of Conrad stayed at a monastery in Adrianople to recover from an illness. Byzantine soldiers burned down the house he was staying in, having plundered his possessions. Frederick was entrusted by Conrad with taking revenge.<sup>3</sup> Choniates condemns the deed of the Byzantine arsonists and deems them keener on plundering than fighting bravely. Kinnamos, by contrast, reports the incident without judging the behavior of the soldiers, putting the blame on the crusaders, the Germans, and Conrad in particular. Frederick's reaction, however, is condemned by both historians. He is presented as a young man incapable of controlling his passion.<sup>4</sup> For the encomiastic narrative of Kinnamos, who adds that Frederick later became the ruler of the Germans, this articulates the contrast between Manouel, the ideal emperor, and his undeserving rival.<sup>5</sup> Choniates's description of Frederick probably originated from the source he employed rather than the historian's own judgement. That this was the basis for this characterization is supported by the fact that he refers to the Hohenstaufen ruler in neutral or flattering terms elsewhere in the history, although the positive portrayal must be appraised in its context of *Kaiserkritik*.<sup>6</sup>

Like the encomiastic sources of the time of the crusade, Kinnamos intended to contrast the valiant Byzantines, led by their heroic emperor Manouel, and the ruthless Germans. For Choniates, no such agenda can be assumed.<sup>7</sup> This is apparent in the portrayal of what followed the arson. According to Choniates, when Frederick had the monastery burned to the ground and imposed the death penalty on the culprits, the imperial official Prosouch restored peace

1 See Lamma (1955–1957); Classen (1970, 1977); Kahl (1977); Zeillinger (1985); Lilie (1992); Magdalino (1993b); Todt (1993); Niederkorn (2000); Tounta (2008b, 2010a); Görlich (2011a).

2 Todt (1993), pp. 134–36. See also Ch. 11, p. 334.

3 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 71(5–19); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 63(36–43).

4 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 71(16–18): “a man ungovernable in passion and really presumptuous on account of his immoderate willfulness” (ἀνδρὶ ὑπ’ ἀσυμμέτρου αὐθαδείας τήν τε ὄρμην ἀκαθέκτω καὶ ἐπεικῶς φρονηματίᾳ); NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 63(43–44): “[Frederick] was high-spirited in general, but then he was also governed by emotion” (ὁ δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ὦν φρονηματίας, τότε δὲ καὶ τῷ πάθει νενικημένος).

5 IOANNES KINNAMOS, trans. Brand, p. 61, n. 53 (p. 241).

6 See section 7 of Ch. 15.

7 See also Roche (2015), pp. 191–194.

by calming the enraged Frederick. In Kinnamos's account, however, Prosouch demonstrates the military strength of the Byzantines to Frederick, killing many barbarians (φόνον βαρβάρων πολὺν εἴργαστο) in the process.<sup>8</sup>

In keeping with his tendency to stress the justice of the emperor's cause and the wickedness of his adversaries, Kinnamos mentions specifically that not only Conrad but also his nephew Frederick swore an oath to leave Italy (i.e., Apulia, possibly Calabria), once it was conquered, to the emperor as their relative Empress Eirene's marriage portion. He stresses that Conrad had not fulfilled any of his promises to Manouel on his death. His statement that Frederick succeeded him implies that he also emulated him in the faithless behavior of a barbarian ruler.<sup>9</sup> Kinnamos's explanation of Frederick obtaining the German throne indicates an awareness of what was going on in the Holy Roman Empire, but also that he considered it merely as an illustrative addition to his imperial narrative.<sup>10</sup> Choniates's history is of a different character, but is even more centered on Byzantium. It therefore does not mention the agreements of Thessalonike and omits Frederick's accession as king.

Frederick appears again briefly in Kinnamos's account, if not by name, in the context of the war against the Normans of southern Italy in the mid-1150s.<sup>11</sup> When Manouel's cousin Andronikos conspired against the *basileus* he looked for allies outside of Byzantium, sending envoys to the "Huns" (Hungarians) and the king of the Germans, as was customary for Byzantine aristocrats at odds with the ruling monarch in the period of the Komnenoi and the Angeloi.<sup>12</sup>

The connection between Hungary, Byzantium, and the Holy Roman Empire plays a role in another passage in Kinnamos's history. Hungary, like Italy, was a zone in which Komnenian-Hohenstaufen rivalry became a political factor and in which Manouel and Frederick competed for influence, even if Italy was of greater importance:

Affairs in the west summoned him, and the emperor left behind matters of his own household and marched to deal with them. For at that time a rumor was current that Frederikos, king of the Alamanni, was setting his

8 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 71(19)–72(4); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 63(44)–64(53).

9 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 87(3–11), 88(7–9).

10 See Ch. 11, pp. 322–323.

11 See Ch. 9, pp. 279–291.

12 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 126(23)–127(2). For other examples, see Cheynet (1990). Andronikos, Manouel's main Byzantine rival, is portrayed unfavorably by Kinnamos, who implies that it was not beneath him to conspire against his cousin with rulers who would potentially harm the empire.

whole people in motion to attack the Romans' land. On this account, and because the king of the Huns [Hungarians], Iatzas [Geza], had ended his life, he went to Sardika. He made a sufficient delay there, as he put a high value on the overlordship of the Huns. For what was reported about the Alamanni was not yet genuine.<sup>13</sup>

This evidences Byzantine concerns that Frederick might one day invade the empire as had the Normans before him once he had gained the upper hand in Italy. As observed by Magdalino, it is no coincidence that this passage follows the recounting of the death of Empress Eirene, Barbarossa's relative and adoptive daughter of his uncle Conrad.<sup>14</sup> Choniates also draws attention to the threat emanating from the German "king," stressing that Manouel was right in supporting Western powers against him, such as the pope and Italian cities, so that Frederick would not become powerful enough to prepare an invasion of Byzantium.<sup>15</sup> This observation, like the *Historia* as a whole, was written years after the Third Crusade. By then, it had become evident that Frederick had not pursued such a plan, out of political considerations but perhaps also influenced by ideas of Christian fraternity,<sup>16</sup> even if there are indications that he might have contemplated it, giving rise to corresponding concerns and rumors. Such rumors that Barbarossa intended to subjugate everyone may have been part of a propaganda campaign of his adversaries.<sup>17</sup> Choniates's assessment could therefore have been influenced by a source from before the crusade, or by numerous attacks by Westerners on imperial territory after Manouel's death, especially Normans and Italian pirates, as well as by the invasion threats of Barbarossa's son Henry VI. Moreover, Frederick's main point of contention appears to have been Manouel's plan for the restoration of Byzantine rule in

13 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 202(15)–203(2): “τῶν ἐσπερίων τῷ τότε καλούντων πραγμάτων, τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐστίαν ἀφέμενος ἐπ’ ἐκεῖνα ἐχώρει. φήμη γὰρ τις ἐκράτει τῷ τηλικαῦτα ὡς ὁ τῶν Ἀλαμανῶν ῥήξ Φρεδερίκος τὸ σύμπαν ἔθνος ἀνακινήσας πανστρατὶ ἐπὶ τὴν Ῥωμαίων φέρεται γῆν. διὰ ταῦτά τε οὖν καὶ ὡς ὁ τῶν Οὐννων ῥήξ Ἰατζᾶς τὸν βίον ἀπολίποι ἐπὶ Σαρδικὴν ἦλθεν. ἔνθα ἐφ’ ἱκανὸν διατρίψας περὶ πλείστου τὴν τῆς Οὐννικῆς ἐπικράτησιν ἐποιεῖτο. ἤδη γὰρ τὰ ἀμφὶ τοῖς Ἀλαμανοῖς θρυλληθέντα οὐκέτι ἐκράτου.”

14 Magdalino (1993b), p. 65. On Kinnamos's chronological imprecision, see IOANNES KINNAMOS, trans. Brand, p. 154, nn. 1–2 (p. 251).

15 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 199(62)–204(78). Manouel's efforts against Frederick in Italy are also referred to in the context of his son Henry VI's threats directed against Byzantium (p. 476[50–54]).

16 Neocleous (2019), pp. 113–114.

17 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 64, 85–86; Todt (1993), pp. 147–148.



Italy and not a general aversion against Romania. Otherwise, the two emperors continued to have common interests.<sup>18</sup>

Choniates's subsequent summary of events is brief and historically inaccurate, but a testimony to Frederick's ambition and rivalry with Manouel. His statement that his coronation in Rome was prevented repeatedly by Manouel (καὶ τὴν πρεσβυτέραν Ῥώμην εἰσιέναι καὶ στεφθῆναι τὸν αὐτὸν ῥῆγα πολλάκις ἐπιβαλλόμενον ἀπεῖρξε τοῦ ἐγχειρήματος) ignores that he had already been crowned emperor in 1155. The literary presentation was probably more important to Choniates: "Thus to this man who marched proudly with gigantic armies access to the most glorious Rome was denied as if to an unarmed man."<sup>19</sup> This can be interpreted as an allusion to Frederick's ambition to control the papacy and thus the city of Rome as well as his imperial claim and the ambition of both emperors to be recognized as sole Roman emperor.<sup>20</sup> Although Frederick captured Rome in July 1167, an epidemic—probably bacterial dysentery—that broke out shortly thereafter weakened his army severely. Major uprisings of Italian cities forced Barbarossa to retreat from Italy in March of the following year. It is therefore understandable that Choniates affirmed in retrospect that Rome was denied to Frederick.<sup>21</sup>

Choniates recounts the destruction of Milan (Μεδιολάνων) by the Germans and how Manouel aided the inhabitants in rebuilding the city's walls in the 1160s.<sup>22</sup>

He adds another example of the effects of Manouel's influence in Italy: his ally, the marquess William of Montferrat, was persuaded by the emperor to attack the army led by Frederick's chancellor, the archbishop Christian of Mainz (Μαγέντζης ἐπίσκοπος), who had subordinated Italian cities. There follows a rare occurrence for a Greek historiographer of the long twelfth century, the quotation and even explanation of a Latin term. Choniates remarks that Christian was "as the Latin tongue wills it, chancellor, or logothete, as Hellenes [Greek-speakers] would say" (ὡς ἡ Λατίνων βούλεται φωνή, καρχελάριος, ὡς δ' Ἕλληνες εἴποιεν, λογοθέτης).<sup>23</sup> In 1179, the son of the marquess, Conrad,

18 Lounghis (2015b), pp. 67–68.

19 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 200(70–77); see p. 200(75–77): "καὶ ἦν ἐκ τούτου τῆς μεγαλοδόξου Ῥώμης ἀποκλειόμενος καθά τις ἄνοπλος ὁ μυριάσι γαυριῶν στρατευμάτων."

20 Niketas never speaks of Frederick's claim directly, only of his desire to be crowned in Rome.

21 Georgi (1990), pp. 178–181; Magdalino (1993b), p. 84; Todt (1993), p. 149. For a more detailed discussion of the epidemic, see Görich (2011a), pp. 417–420.

22 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 200(78–82).

23 On Choniates's explanation of the title *cancellarius*, see also NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 459, n. 10 (pp. 635–636).

overcame the chancellor's army, put the Germans to flight, and took captives, including Christian himself.<sup>24</sup> He asserts that Conrad swore not to release the chancellor except upon the command of the *basileus*.<sup>25</sup> The statement may reflect a rumor that might have arisen because Manouel asked for Christian's transfer to Constantinople when another son of the marquess of Montferrat, Renier, was about to be married to Manouel's daughter Maria.<sup>26</sup>

The city of Ancona was also involved in the conflict with Frederick, its unsuccessful siege being a setback for the Hohenstaufen ruler.<sup>27</sup>

Frederick was "full of anger" (θυμοῦ ὑποπίμπλαται) because of Ancona's collaboration with Manouel, which had the goal of depriving him of the allegiance of the cities in the region.<sup>28</sup> The description of Barbarossa in this instance appears to be reminiscent of the topical image of the barbarian conveyed by Kinnamos and Choniates (in the narrative of the Second Crusade), governed by the impulses of the moment rather than reason. Here, too, the wording seems more reflective of Choniates's source than his personal attitude, whereas Kinnamos's presentation fits his encomiastic stance.<sup>29</sup>

A main point the historian Choniates probably meant to convey regarding the power struggles in Italy was that Manouel's policy of playing Western powers against each other was ultimately sensible.

Kinnamos follows in a similar vein, equally stressing that "the power of Frederikos, king of the Alamanni, moment by moment advanced and waxed great" (Φρεδερίκω δὲ τῷ ῥηγί Ἀλαμανῶν ἐπὶ μέγα ἐκάστοτε τὰ τῆς δυνάμεως ἐχώρει καὶ ἠΰξανεν) but unsurprisingly exaggerating Manouel's accomplishments against him. In order to contextualize Manouel's Italian policy designed to keep Frederick in check, the historiographer summarizes Frederick's intention to stabilize his rule by claiming funds, i.e., taxes and fees, "something not previously customary" (οὐκ εἰθισμένον τοῦτό γε αὐτῷ πρότερον).<sup>30</sup> The German ruler and his followers meant to make use of the rich resources that the peninsula had to offer, especially as compared to Germany. Frederick had tried for several decades to win the struggle against the Italian cities and assert his imperial

24 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 200(83)–201(4).

25 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 382(67–73).

26 Georgi (1990), pp. 327–339; Todt (1993), pp. 142–143, 153; Zorzi (2012), pp. 287–288.

27 See Ch. 2, pp. 131–138; Georgi (1990), pp. 232–236.

28 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 201(10)–203(57).

29 The main difference is Choniates's wording, but the idea is largely the same. See also EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 16, p. 278(77–82), mentioning the displeasure of "a haughty king" (ῥήξ μεγαλόφρωνς) at the loyalty of the Anconitans to Emperor Manouel.

30 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 228(3–7).

rights, which he defined in the Diet of Roncaglia (November 1158).<sup>31</sup> This concentration on Italy, combined with Manouel's efforts to prevent Frederick from reaching his goal, was one of the reasons why Manouel was more successful than Frederick in asserting his influence in Hungary, Kinnamos explains. According to the historian, Manouel's successes on the Hungarian and the Italian front induced Frederick to resolve their differences, by making peace with the Byzantines and joining the war against the Hungarian king Stephen. His uncle Henry II of Austria acted as a mediator.<sup>32</sup> Kinnamos thus turns a tactical move by Frederick into an admission of defeat. He offered to leave Hungary to Manouel, which Frederick thought would prevent action against him in Italy, of vital interest to Frederick as opposed to Hungary.<sup>33</sup> Henry would later attempt to negotiate an armistice with Hungary.

According to Kinnamos, Frederick struggled to hold on to the city of Rome, "when the bishop in Rome agreed to return to the ancient usage." The "ancient usage" stands for Manouel's acceptance as sole Roman emperor.

Again, Kinnamos portrays Frederick's diplomatic efforts as an admission of defeat:

He [Frederick] also promised many other things against his will, since the peoples there had been roused to war against him by pressures from the emperor. Therefore, a little before, when he was in sore straits, desiring to win over the emperor, he wrote and negotiated with him in friendly fashion, and as stated agreed to cooperate with him against the Huns [Hungarians].<sup>34</sup>

Manouel and the pope are said to have failed to come to an agreement due to differences of opinion concerning the seat of imperial power (Rome vs. Constantinople). The more substantial disagreement, however, lay in the incompatibility between the claims and ideology of the papacy and the conception of imperial dignity in Romania. That not much is made of the papal position is congruent with the tendency of Byzantine literature to ignore or

31 For a detailed discussion of Barbarossa's Italian policies and politics, see the studies cited at the beginning of this chapter, n. 1.

32 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 236(10–15).

33 Todt (1993), pp. 145–146 (incl. n. 50); Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1463, p. 244.

34 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 261(19)–262(1): "καὶ ἄλλα τῶν οὐ κατὰ γνώμην ὑπέστη πολλά, τῶν τῆδε ἔθνῶν ἐκπεπολεμημένων αὐτῷ ταῖς ἐκ βασιλείως συνωθήσεσι. δι' ἃ καὶ ὀλίγῳ μὲν πρότερον, ὀπηνίκα ἔτι ἐν κακοῖς ἦν, ὑποποιεῖσθαι τὸν βασιλέα θέλων, πέμψας φιλία διελέξατο κατὰ Οὐννων τε ὡσπερ εἴρηται συνάρασθαι αὐτῷ ὡμολόγει."

gloss over claims rivaling the conception of Byzantine-Roman imperial power. Elsewhere, when the historian does discuss papal claims, in concert with those of the Western emperor, he utterly rejects them. He considers it appropriate for the pope to submit to imperial supremacy and abandon lofty pretensions of papal primacy. The criticism pertains as well to the rituals associated with the coronation of the Western emperor, whose imperial title is roundly negated. The pope is exhorted to accept Manouel as single Roman emperor as promised.<sup>35</sup>

Kinnamos implies that Frederick showed his true face again, making use of *topoi* that characterized barbarians as hypocritical and false:

Frederikos therefore regained his bravado and again displayed his malice. As he intended to invade the Romans' land, he commenced to divide it among his followers with barbaric folly. Since, because of the emperor's opposition, he was unsuccessful in other schemes, he resorted to the embassy of this Errikos [Henry of Austria] and Bladigratzos [Otto of Wittelsbach]. He planned by an appearance of friendship to persuade the emperor to desist from what was being undertaken against him; thus he could easily prepare for war against the Romans.<sup>36</sup>

Manouel understood this, but “reached no final conclusion in regard to Frederikos.” The *basileus* and his advisers had far too much political experience to trust anyone, especially powerful monarchs such as the Staufers, but they saw manifold advantages in a rapprochement, notably regarding Italy, and continued to pursue this goal for decades.

As in Choniates's account, the capture of Milan is mentioned briefly: the remarks exaggerate the rise of Frederick, who allegedly put to flight “the people of the Ligurians or Lombards” (τὸ Λιγούρων εἶτ' οὖν Λαμπάρδων ἔθνος) and marched to “the innermost parts of the West” (τὰ ἐνδότερα τῶν ἑσπερίων). It is historically accurate that Frederick managed to take Rome.<sup>37</sup> Attention is then

35 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 262(1–5). See also below, pp. 347–351.

36 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 262(5–13): “διὰ ταῦτα ἀναθαρσῆσας Φρεδερίκος ἀδῖς τὴν δυσμένειαν ἐξεδείκνυ, εἰς γῆν τε τὴν Ῥωμαίων εἰσβαλεῖν διανοούμενος βαρβαρικῆ τινὶ ἀπονοίᾳ ἤδη καὶ διαμερίζειν αὐτὴν τοῖς περὶ αὐτὸν ἤρξατο. ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀντιπραττομένου ἐπινοίαις ἐτέραις ἀπρακτος ἦν, ἐπὶ τὴν δι' Ἐρρίκου τούτου καὶ Βλαδιγράτζου ἐπέειδε πρεσβείαν, μηχανώμενος ὅπως ἂν ἐν φιλίᾳ προσγήματι ἀποσχέσθαι τῶν κατ' αὐτοῦ ἐγγχειρουμένων ἀναπίεσας τὸν βασιλέα αὐτὸς οὕτω ἐς τὸν κατὰ Ῥωμαίων εὐχερῶς ἀποδύσῃται πόλεμον.”

37 In July 1167 according to Todt (1993), p. 149.

drawn to the possibility that Frederick might direct his forces against Romania, “at which from a long time back he had cast a greedy eye.”<sup>38</sup>

Manouel reacted to this threat by dispatching secret agents to the West in order to counteract Frederick, notably a mission to the Venetians led by Nikephoros Chalouphes.<sup>39</sup> Kinnamos’s narrative then reverts to events of 1159:<sup>40</sup> Frederick “had subdued” (περιγεγονώς) Rome and removed from the throne “[Pope] Alexandros [III], who was then archpriest there” (Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ τῆδε ἀρχιερέυς) and replaced him with Ottaviano (Ὀκταβιανός):

thereby I think deeming that he would assimilate to himself the rank of autokrator [emperor] of the Romans. For no one except the emperor of the Romans is allowed to nominate an archpriest for Rome. [...] Frederikos, however, had earlier eyed the office of emperor, and as he laid hands on this, he seemed to possess an important token of it. He won over many bishops, and seemingly validated his innovation by a synod. To the other kings, however, this did not seem praiseworthy, but no one was able to oppose Frederikos, who had advanced to a high degree of strength, except that the emperor hindered him with money and other devices for this purpose, and re-established Alexandros on his throne. But this was later.<sup>41</sup>

In 1159, Frederick’s coronation as emperor was a few years in the past, but for Kinnamos this detail was insignificant. What the encomiastic historiographer means is not the title itself but rather a certain conception of it that Frederick intended to assert and impose on the papacy, thereby preventing the pope from recognizing Manouel as the one true Roman emperor.<sup>42</sup>

38 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 228(7–16); see p. 228(15–16): “πολὺς ἐξ οὗ χρόνος λίχρον ἐπιρρίψαντα ταύτῃ ὀφθαλμόν.” Greed, especially for the land of the Byzantines, is a traditional topical barbarian trait.

39 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 228(16–22). The mission probably occurred in late 1164 or early 1165; see Georgi (1990), pp. 156–159.

40 Magdalino (1993b), p. 64.

41 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 228(22)–229(15): “ἐντεῦθεν οἶμαι τοῦ Ῥωμαίων αυτοκράτορος προσαρμόσειν αὐτῷ τὸ ἀξίωμα οἰηθεῖς· οὐδενὶ γὰρ ἄλλω ὅτι μὴ βασιλεῖ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχιερέα προβεβλήθῃ σθαι τῆ Ῥώμῃ ἐφεῖται. [...] ἀλλὰ Φρεδερίκος τῆ αυτοκράτορος πάλαι ἐποφθαλμίζων ἀρχῆ, καὶ τοῦτο δὴ μέγιστον αὐτῆς γνώρισμα ὑφαρπασάμενος ἔδοξεν ἔχειν. ὁ δὲ καὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων ὑποποιησάμενος πολλοὺς ὑπὸ συνόδῳ δῆθεν ἐκύρωσε τὰ τοῦ νεωτερισμοῦ. τοῦτο ῥῆξι τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔδοξε μὲν οὐκ ἐπαινετόν, ἐδυνήθη δὲ οὐδεὶς Φρεδερίκω ἀντιπράξαι δυνάμειος ἐπὶ πλείστον ἤκοντι, ὅτι μὴ βασιλεὺς χρήμασί τε καὶ μηχαναῖς ἐτέραις ἐμποδῶν αὐτῷ κἂν τούτῳ ἐγένετο, Ἀλέξανδρον ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου εἰσαύθις καταστησάμενος. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὕστερον.”

42 For the negotiations about this recognition, see Harris and Tolstoy-Miloslavski (2012).

Chalouphe's address to the Venetians<sup>43</sup> claims that they have been wronged by Frederick, who is denounced as a man intending to undo rightful institutions established by time and custom out of lust for power (ὕπὸ φιλαρχία καὶ τὰ χρόνῳ καὶ ἔθει κεκρατηκότα μακρῶ διαλύειν). The Venetians are congratulated for their support of Frederick's opponents in Milan and their continued resistance. Frederick "bears hatred for the emperor and, trusting in his unexpected success, he requires something unsuitable, to be titled emperor of the Romans. He does not know that fortune's unexpected results usually slip quickly away, because they are not fixed in a firm seat."<sup>44</sup>

This comment about fortune (τύχη), although generally considered a maxim of relevance, is associated with the topical image of the barbarian reacting in an exaggerated and unreasonable manner to success and failure. Kinnamos has earlier applied this image to Frederick's uncle Conrad.

The imperial propagandist Kinnamos continues to obscure Manouel's realpolitik. The Venetians were persuaded by Chalouphe's words and many Italian cities went over to the emperor. Manouel, however, did not accomplish this openly, still desiring "to conceal his hatred toward Frederikos" (τὸ γὰρ ἐς Φρεδερίκον ἔχθος ἐγκρυφιάζειν ἔτι ἤθελεν).<sup>45</sup> This is doubtful, given that Manouel was willing to renew the Hohenstaufen-Byzantine alliance in the 1170s and was a pragmatic ruler in general. Even if he did hold a personal grudge against Frederick, it did not influence his policy; the same observation has been made with respect to differences in imperial ideology.<sup>46</sup>

In his account of Manouel's wars with Hungary in the 1160s, Kinnamos inserts a major digression, which concerns Frederick's imperial pretensions:<sup>47</sup>

The title of empire disappeared in Rome a long time back, since the attributes of power passed, after [...] Augoustoulos, to Odoakros and then to Theuderichos, ruler of the Goths, who were both tyrants [i.e., usurpers]

43 On the reliability of alleged quotations in Kinnamos's history, see Ch. 11, p. 328.

44 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 229(15)–230(18); see p. 230(14–18): "δι' ἃ καὶ δι' ἀπεχθείας αὐτὸς βασιλεῖ φέρεται, ἀλογίστῳ τε πιστεύων εὐπραγία καὶ Ῥωμαίων οὐδὲν προσήκον αὐτοκράτωρ κεκλήσθαι ἄξιοι, οὐκ εἰδὼς ὡς τὰ τῆς τύχης παράλογα ἄτε οὐκ ἐπ' ἀσφαλούς βεβηκότα τῆς ἔδρας ταχὺ καταρρεῖν εἴωθε".

45 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 230(18)–231(5); see p. 231(2–3): "καὶ πλείστα ἄλλα τῶν ἐν Λιγούροις περιφανεστάτων πόλεων βασιλεῖ προσεχώρησαν." On the representation of Manouel's relations with Italian cities, see Ch. 2.

46 Lilie (1985); Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 100–111; Gastgeber (2011a); Kolia-Dermitzaki (2014); Hehl (2020).

47 See also Ch. 11, p. 332, for Kinnamos's similarly oriented assertion that Conrad III unlawfully granted the title of king (βῆξ) to the ruler of Bohemia.

[...] From the time of Theuderichos and a little earlier, until now, Rome existed in a state of revolt, although repeatedly recovered for the Romans [...] As they [the Westerners] have no claim on the lofty status of the empire, whence do they propose for themselves such offices [kingship etc.], which [...] descend from the empire's majesty like distinctions?<sup>48</sup>

Even worse than the illegitimate dispensation of titles and the alienation of Old Rome from imperial rule, however, was the following according to Kinnamos:

Although it is not fitting, they usurp the highest peak of authority and confer the imperial dignity [ἰμπέριον] on themselves. This piece of drunken folly requires explanation. Now they rashly declare that the empire in Byzantium is different from that in Rome. As I consider this, it has repeatedly caused me to weep. The rule of Rome has, like a piece of property, been sold to barbarians and really servile men. Therefore it has no right to a bishop nor, much more, to a ruler.<sup>49</sup>

Kinnamos, in agreement with encomiastic sources, presents the ideological, official Byzantine stance on claims of the Western emperor and the pope, condemning them as barbarians having no right to the status of empire. He significantly renders the Latin term *imperium* into Greek as ἰμπέριον, acknowledging that the Latin conception of empire constituted a threat to that of Byzantium. The nature of the Western emperor and the pope is servile in conformity with the traditional topos of the barbarian. The narrator's comments are presented in an extraordinary fashion, digressions with expressions of a historiographer's personal sorrow and the shedding of tears being an infrequent occurrence. It can be inferred that it was not a routine employment, but more of a conscious expression.<sup>50</sup> Kinnamos's words seem reflective of a sense of threat that

48 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 218(14–21), 219(3–6): “μακρὸς γὰρ ἐξ οὗ χρόνος τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὄνομα ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀπώλετο, ἐξ ὅτου μετὰ [...] Αὐγουστούλον [...] ἐπὶ Ὀδοάκρον καὶ Θεωδέριχον ἐξῆς τὸν Γότθων ἡγεμόνα τυράννους ἄμφω μετέβη τὰ τῆς ἡγεμονίας [...] Ῥώμῃ μέντοι ἀπὸ Θεωδερίχου καὶ ὀλίγῳ πρότερον ἄχρι καὶ νῦν στασιαζομένη διαγέγονε [...] οἷς δὲ μὴ τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας μέτεστιν ὕψους, πόθεν οὗτοι τηλικίας προβεβλήσονται ἀρχάς, [...] οἷον τινες διαιρέσεις ἐκ τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας καθίενται κράτους.”

49 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 219(6–12): “τοῖς δὲ οὐκ ἀπόχρη μόνον, εἰ τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας οὐδὲν προσήκον ἐπιβατεύουσιν ὕψους, ἰμπέριον ἑαυτοῖς περιτιθέντες κράτος. βούλεται δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ἄκρατον ἐρμηνεύειν. ἀλλ’ ἤδη καὶ τὴν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ βασιλείαν ἐτέραν παρὰ τὴν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀποφαίνειν τολμῶσιν. ἄπερ ἐμοὶ διασκοπούμενῳ πολλὰ κίς ἤδη καὶ δακρυῦσαι ἐπήλθεν. οἷον γάρ, οἷον ἢ Ῥώμῃς ἀρχὴ βαρβάρους καὶ δεινῶς ἀνδραποδώδεσιν ἀνθρώποις διεκατηλεύθη χρῆμα.”

50 It is only in one other instance that Kinnamos expresses himself in similar terms: when he describes how the slaughtering of Hungarians in Zeugminon by the Byzantines caused

induced him to bring up Frederick's claims in the first place. His words are also a reaction to the Peace of Venice (1177), which saw the end of Manouel's long-lasting efforts to come to an agreement with Pope Alexander.<sup>51</sup> In the past, rival imperial claims had mostly been regarded as so irrelevant by the Byzantines that they did not even mention them.<sup>52</sup>

Increasing exposure to Western claims did not cause a major shift in imperial ideology. If it had any effect, it was to lead to a stronger emphasis on that ideology. Under severe military pressure during the Third Crusade, the *basileus* Isaakios II, in early 1190, employed in his correspondence with Barbarossa the "best" possible title he could officially concede to him: "emperor of Old Rome" (*imperator antiquae Romae*).<sup>53</sup> To counterbalance this address and reaffirm his superiority, Isaakios called himself "heir to the scepter of Konstantinos the Great" (κληρονόμος τοῦ στέμματος τοῦ μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου) in imitation of Manouel I, who used this addition to the imperial title in the synodal edict of 1166, which was displayed in an inscription in Hagia Sophia.<sup>54</sup> According to the "Sacred Arsenal" of Andronikos Kamateros, composed a few years later and also commissioned by Manouel, the emperor, in a discussion with Roman cardinals, referred to a similar concept as "the authority and imperial power

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him to weep (p. 245[18–22]; see Ch. 13, p. 368). On the representation of weeping and tears in Byzantine literature, see also Hinterberger (2006); Grünbart (2008); Odorico (2011); Alexiou and Cairns (2017), esp. the contribution by Mullett (2017).

51 See also Chalandon (1912), vol. 2, pp. 556–557; Todt (1993), p. 152; Sicienski (2017), pp. 275–276. See also the previous discussion of Byzantine fears that Frederick might one day invade Romania. The reference to "the German" (ὁ Ἀλαμανός), i.e. Frederick, in an anonymous ENCOMIUM TO MANOUEL I, p. 307, composed in ca. 1172, adopts a similar tone, but is less explicit: "The insolent Alamann, who raises his eyebrow above his temple, and dreaming of the most vain, relying on vanity and following illusory ideas, after having experienced the courage and noble prowess of our invincible emperor, trembles with fear before your wisdom, o emperor, before the elevation and efficiency of your thoughts. He is restrained in his eagerness and deprived of his insolence" (ὁ θρασὺς Ἀλαμανός, ὁ τὴν ὄφρυν ὑπὲρ τὸν κρόταφον ἄιρων καὶ ὄνειροπολῶν τὰ κενώτατα καὶ ἐπὶ κενοῖς ἐρειδόμενος καὶ ἀνεμῶλιά τινα διανοούμενος σκέμματα, πείρα μαθῶν σου τὴν μεγαλονίκου ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος εὐανδρίαν καὶ γενναιότητα φρίττει τὰς εὐβουλίας σου, βασιλεῦ, τὰ τῶν νοημάτων ὑψηλὰ καὶ δραστήρια καὶ συστέλλεται τῆς ὀρμῆς καὶ τοῦ θράσους ἀναχαιτίζεται). See also KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, Encomium of 1173, which resembles the anonymous oration in the censure of the "Alamanni and Teutons" and their leader. GREGORIOS ANTIOCHOS, Funerary Oration for Manouel I, pp. 212–213, alludes to Frederick's cooperation with the sultan of Ikonion with the goal of harming the emperor's rule. See also Magdalino (1993b), pp. 487–488.

52 Lilie (1985), pp. 242–243.

53 Kresten (2000), pp. 152, 154, 158; Mitsiou (2010), pp. 37–38; Görich (2013); Hehl (2020), esp. pp. 56–58.

54 Kresten (2000), p. 154.



which has always pertained to our state in Old Rome and all Italy, and all the other rights and privileges belonging to it in these lands.”<sup>55</sup>

Kinnamos criticizes the Western monarch for customarily acting as *strator* to the pope, ignoring that Frederick also disapproved of the ritual;<sup>56</sup> Kinnamos’s message, however, pertains to the ritual as contrary to imperial ideals. He also deplors that the pope called the emperor *imperator*, quoting this Latin title, and thus acknowledged him as the equal of the *basileus*. He subsequently addresses the Roman pontiff and speaks of the falsification of the imperial title in the West.<sup>57</sup>

In this context, a relevant source, which Kinnamos would likely have had knowledge of, is a letter that Barbarossa appears to have sent to Constantinople after the Byzantine defeat at Myriokephalon (1176). In it, he urged Manouel to renounce his imperial claims. This constituted a capital offence. On the Second Crusade, Frederick had witnessed Byzantine imperial propaganda on display in Constantinople.<sup>58</sup> In opposition, the Holy Roman Emperor’s letter asserted a right to rule over “the kingdom of Greece,” as he called it.<sup>59</sup> Hohenstaufen claims were a threat given Barbarossa’s military might, especially after he had come to an agreement with Alexander III in 1177 that gave him the possibility of directing his military might and ideas of universal *sacrum imperium* elsewhere.

After the high point of rivalry under Manouel, Barbarossa disappears from view in Choniates’s history, only to reappear in 1189 when he again crossed Romania’s borders, again on a crusade—this time as its leader.<sup>60</sup>

This crusade provided Choniates with another appropriate occasion to criticize Isaakios, reinforcing his image as an incompetent, misguided ruler. The historian speaks of the crusade as an addition to the numerous troubles the empire faced during the time of Isaakios II: “In fact, as if the fights

55 ANDRONIKOS KAMATEROS, *Sacred Arsenal*, p. 22(5–9): “περί τῆς εἰς τὴν παλαιάν Ῥώμην καὶ πάσαν τὴν Ἰταλίαν τῷ ἡμετέρῳ κράτει διαφερούσης ἀνέκαθεν αὐθεντίας καὶ βασιλικῆς ἐξουσίας, καὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς τοιαύταις χώραις ἀνηκόντων τούτῳ λοιπῶν πάντων δικαίων καὶ προνομίων πρεσβεύουσας.” See also Magdalino (1993b), p. 88.

56 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand (1976), p. 166, n. 22 (p. 253).

57 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 219(12)–220(24).

58 Görich (2013), p. 74.

59 See Böhmer and Opll (2001), no. 2222, pp. 143–144, no. 2320, p. 182, dating Frederick’s response to August 1177. In it, Barbarossa even referred to himself as *Graecorum moderator*, which, if it was known in Constantinople, may have caused scandal. *Graecorum moderator* could be read as direct reaction to Manouel’s usage of the title *Romanorum moderator*. See also Georgi (1990), pp. 333–339; Kresten (1992/93), esp. p. 104.

60 On the crusade headed by Barbarossa, see Eickhoff (1977); Lilie (2004), pp. 136–142; Görich (2011a), ch. 13.

with the barbarians who surrounded us had not been sufficient to punish us appropriately, a calamity from abroad burst in as well: Frederick, king of the Alamanni.” He does add that Frederick sent envoys to Isaakios to ask for permission to cross Byzantine territory in a friendly fashion (διὰ φιλίας) on his way to Palestine.<sup>61</sup>

Choniates makes clear that the calamity was caused not so much by the intentions of Frederick, who, according to Choniates, was not an enemy, but rather Isaakios’s incompetent response to the crusade. The history implies that the way the crusade unfolded rather than the crusade as such was divine retribution for Byzantine sins.<sup>62</sup> The emperor sent the logothete Ioannes Doukas, to Frederick in order to obtain guarantees that his army would not harm anything or anyone, while the Byzantines, on their part, gave assurances that they would provide all necessities in abundance. Isaakios remained faithful to this agreement for a time, ordering provincials to gather provisions at various locations along the king’s route. Once Frederick was “inside the Roman borders” (ἐντὸς τῶν ὀρίων Ῥωμαϊκῶν), Doukas, joined by Andronikos Kantakouzenos, was dispatched again to get assurances that the passage of the German army would proceed as planned.

But they, out of ignorance of what needed to be done and out of true incompetence (even if they may be friends to me, it is nonetheless necessary to honor the truth, as it takes precedence and is dearer), they made the king furious against the Romans and convinced the emperor to view him with suspicion and as his enemy.<sup>63</sup>

Accordingly, Isaakios broke the oaths sworn by his envoys and ceased to provide supplies for the German army. Choniates was personally involved in the resulting calamities, as he was *doux* (governor) of the city of Philippoupolis at the time. The narrative of the crusade develops the theme of its incompetent and incoherent handling by Isaakios, which is contrasted with Frederick’s

61 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 401(21–28); see p. 401(21–23): “ὡς γὰρ τι ἐνδεόντων πρὸς τὸ καθήκον τῆς μαστιγώσεως τῶν ἐκ τοῦ κύκλω βαρβαρικοῦ μαχησμῶν, καὶ ὑπερόριον κακὸν εἰσεκώμασε Φρεδερίχος ὁ τῶν Ἀλαμανῶν ῥήξ.” The expression διὰ φιλίας is also employed with regards to Conrad and the other leaders of the Second Crusade: see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 61(66).

62 For the introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

63 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 402(29–48); see p. 402(44–48): “ἀλλ’ οὗτοι ἀνεπιστημοσύνη τῶν ὀφειλόντων γενέσθαι καὶ μαλακότητι οἰκεία [χρεῶν γὰρ καὶ φίλων ἡμῖν τῶν ἀνδρῶν ὄντων ὡς πρεσβυτέραν καὶ φιλτέραν τιμᾶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν] αὐτὸν τε τὸν ῥήγα κατὰ Ῥωμαίων ἐξέμηναν καὶ τὸν βασιλέα ὡς πολέμιον ἐκεῖνον ὑφορᾶσθαι παρέπεισαν.”

honorable conduct. Choniates, pursuing other interests, does not specify why his emperor was opposed to the crusade to such a degree, but several factors might explain it.<sup>64</sup>

Frederick's army was formidable, consisting almost exclusively of soldiers. With consideration to the recent Sicilian invasion and the previous strained relations with Barbarossa, Isaakios might have been concerned about possible undisclosed intentions, despite Frederick's assurances. Further, the German ruler's dealings with Bulgarians, Vlachs, and Serbs were seen by the *basileus* as an illegitimate intervention in the affairs of the empire or as a conspiracy with Isaakios's bitterest opponents in the Balkans. In retrospect, Byzantine concerns may have been groundless, but one can easily understand why Frederick's crusade caused much unease and alarm, if not panic.<sup>65</sup>

Choniates mocks Isaakios's failure to hold Philippoupolis against Barbarossa as "most amusing" (τὸ χαριέστερον). An illustration of imperial incompetence was the command to reinforce the walls of Philippoupolis followed by an order to tear them down to avoid the use of the city as a fortress by the Germans. Avoiding the roads, which had been blocked by the Byzantines, Frederick reached Philippoupolis despite Isaakios's efforts, the Byzantines failing even to notice how Frederick occupied the city behind their backs.<sup>66</sup>

The unflattering contrast between the Byzantines and the Germans is then developed further. Despite Isaakios's hostile actions, Frederick reaffirmed emphatically that he was willing to stick to the agreements, that he had no interest in a quarrel with the Byzantines, and that he did not intend to harm them in any way, which Choniates implies to have been the truth. Isaakios, however, did nothing to ease the strained relations. On the contrary, he incited the *prōtostratōr* Manouel Kamytzes to reinforce the attacks against the crusaders, especially small bands looking for provisions.<sup>67</sup>

This course of action is said to have been inspired by another incompetent adviser of the unfortunate Isaakios. According to Choniates, Dositheos, patriarch of Constantinople (1189–91), believed that Frederick was lying about the aim of his expedition and did not intend to go to Palestine, but instead desired the "Queen of the Cities."<sup>68</sup> Dositheos prophesized that Frederick would make an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to capture the city, but would enter it

64 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 402(49)–403(81).

65 See also Eickhoff (1977), pp. 63–68; Görich (2011a), ch. 13. For the discussion of additional factors involved in Byzantine responses to the crusade, see below.

66 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 402(49)–403(81); see p. 403(66–67).

67 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 403(82)–404(93).

68 There is no reference to Dositheos in the earlier b-version at this point (p. 404[94–1 app.]).

through the Xylokerkos gate, which caused Isaakios to have the gate walled up. The emperor also made a fool of himself by carrying arrows on his person on multiple occasions: with these arrows he would aim for the hearts of the Germans from a window of the palace of Blachernai.<sup>69</sup> Dositheos, also former patriarch of Jerusalem in exile, may have been motivated by the situation in the Holy Land. His hostile stance was supported by some vocal Byzantine ecclesiastics, but it must not be taken as representative of all Byzantines or even the majority.<sup>70</sup> As Constantinopolitan patriarch he lacked support and was forced to resign after a short tenure, as Choniates, who is critical of Dositheos, relates.<sup>71</sup>

Several factors probably played into Dositheos's actions which may well have been motivated more by political considerations than a negative attitude toward Latins. His Venetian origin and pursuance of Venetian interests plausibly played a major role. Moreover, Frederick, militarily powerful, renowned and displaying an ambitious imperial ideology, was credible in the role of the last, messianic emperor and could thus easily be associated with corresponding predictions that Dositheos made in accordance with prophetic tradition—contrary to the impression given by Choniates, who portrayed him as a false prophet. In addition, the patriarch was held in high esteem by Isaakios—whose assumption of the imperial throne he had predicted.<sup>72</sup>

The narrative then turns back to Isaakios's measures against the Germans. They were warned of Kamytzes's plan to attack smaller groups collecting provisions and put to flight the Romans, whose low morale and cowardice Choniates emphasizes. This defeat weakened Isaakios's resolve.<sup>73</sup>

A rumor circulated among the Germans, Choniates relates, of an alliance between Isaakios and “the ruler of the Saracens” (Saladin), which included the fanciful detail that sultan and emperor had drunk each other's blood according to a Saracen custom. For a long time, many scholars believed in such an alliance, connecting it with the influential hypotheses of mounting tension and increasing Byzantine hostility against Westerners.<sup>74</sup> Neocleous, however, has shown that there is no persuasive evidence that a Byzantine-Saracen alliance existed. It is far more probable that the indications in the sources merely reflect a contemporary rumor about such an alliance. From the perspective

69 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 403(82)–404(13).

70 Neocleous (2019), pp. 116–118, 228–234.

71 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 405(14)–408(90).

72 See Magdalino (2005), pp. 51–52; (2007b); (2009b), pp. 66–69; also Ch. 1, pp. 32–33.

73 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 408(91)–409(35).

74 See Introduction, pp. 13–14.

of the crusaders, it was an evident explanation for Isaakios's hostile attitude toward Frederick's expedition.<sup>75</sup>

Isaakios, drawing more criticism from Choniates, considered offering no further resistance to the king's advance, but then returned to his hostile attitude when he heard that Frederick intended to wait to cross to Asia Minor in the spring rather than do it immediately. Plausibly motivated by Dositheos,<sup>76</sup> he wrote a letter to Barbarossa in which, "in a way not befitting emperors" (βασιλευῶσιν οὐχ ἄρμοδιῶς), he predicted the king's death before Easter. Choniates comments, "I omit that which is more blameworthy than praiseworthy concerning what he said and did thereafter." Isaakios, in any case, sent Frederick's envoys back to him.<sup>77</sup>

The following remarks point to something which is discussed more extensively in Kinnamos's narrative and especially in Western sources, notably Frederick's letter to Manouel after Myriokephalon: the German monarch's insistence on the recognition of his imperial ideology. When he learned that his envoys, "bishops and relatives of his," had been slighted by Isaakios, Frederick reacted furiously (διαπριόμενος), but only retaliated by mocking the envoys sent by Isaakios, forcing them to sit together with servants:

Thereby he ridiculed the Romans and demonstrated to them that they do not distinguish according to virtue and birth, but that they, in the manner of swineherds, chase all the pigs into a sty, without singling out the fat ones, which are sold for a higher price. In that manner, the Romans, too, make all stand [before the emperor].<sup>78</sup>

Choniates continues to ridicule Isaakios and his subordinates through Frederick. The Holy Roman Emperor, dividing his troops due to a lack of provisions, told his son and the bishops whom he left in Philippoupolis: "You have to rest here, until you have strengthened your weakened legs and knees exhausted from standing before the emperor of the Greeks." The historian employs the term *Graikoi*, which clearly has a pejorative connotation. It conveys that

75 Neocleous (2010, 2013a); Harris (2014), pp. 132–135, 140–141.

76 Magdalino (2009b), p. 67.

77 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., pp. 409(36)–410(57); see p. 410(55–56): "τὰ ἐν μέσῳ παρῶ πλείω κατηγορίαν τοῦ θρῶντος καὶ λέγοντος ἤπερ ἔπαινον ἔχοντα."

78 NIKETAS CHONIATES, Hist., p. 410(57–72); see p. 410(67–72): "ἐν οἷς ἔπραττε Ῥωμαίους καταμωκώμενος καὶ δεικνὺς μὴ ἀρετῆς καὶ γένους παρ' αὐτοῖς εἶναι διαστολήν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐς συφεδὸν οἱ συφορβοὶ τὰς ὕς ἀπαξάπασας εἰσελῶσιν μὴ διιστῶντες τὰς πίονας καὶ πλειόνως διαχέειν ἔχουσας τὸ ἀποδίδοσθαι, οὕτω καὶ Ῥωμαῖοι παραστατοῦντας ἔχουσιν ἅπαντας."

Isaakios and his officials did not live up to the standard of Romans, and therefore deserved to be disparaged as *Graikoi*.<sup>79</sup> As for the differences in ceremonial, there is no need to assume that they contributed to strained Byzantine-Western relations in a major way. They were more likely an expression rather than a cause of tension and conflict, and it is likely no coincidence that they are brought up in the context of the passage of the crusade.<sup>80</sup>

Choniates does not hold back in continuing his scathing criticism of Isaakios and fellow Byzantines. The *basileus* had to agree to a renewal of oaths and guarantees exchanged beforehand and to send hostages to ensure compliance with them, while Frederick's "toparchs and grandees" (τοπάρχαι καὶ μεγιστάνες) swore that the army would follow the main road. This employment of Greek literary language to refer to Frederick's noble followers is a noteworthy example of the generic tendency of historiography of the middle period, because the narrative deals with non-Byzantines in a terminology oriented toward "self" rather than "others."<sup>81</sup> Some judges of the veil, however, were not willing to serve as hostages and went into hiding. Isaakios punished them by confiscating their property, although he later restored it, because he realized that they had not acted thus out of insubordination but "out of not unreasonable fear."<sup>82</sup> This remark might indicate the expectation that Isaakios, who had proven inconstant in his handling of the crusade, would violate the agreements and thus forfeit the life of hostages. Other sources reveal that Frederick considered attacking Constantinople to increase pressure on Isaakios to give in. This certainly supported the criticism of Isaakios's behavior as reckless.<sup>83</sup> Choniates mentions that Isaakios sent 400 pounds of silver coins and precious cloth interwoven with gold to show his good will, but does not specify what gifts Frederick offered in return. The mistrust between the two remained. Frederick demanded that his army be shipped to Asia Minor in two crossings as he was concerned that the Byzantines might attack smaller divisions of his army. Indeed, the king's caution proved justified when the inhabitants of

79 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 411(74–80); see p. 411(77–80): "ἀναπαύσασθαι χρεῶν ὑμᾶς ἐνταυθοί, ἄχρι δὴ τὰς παρειμένας κνήμας καὶ τὰ παραλελυμένα γόνατα ἐκ τοῦ παρίστασθαι τῷ βασιλεῖ Γραικῶν ἀναρρωσθεῖητε." See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 445, n. 111 (p. 747); Kaldellis (2007a), pp. 68–69, 115–116, 186, 336–338, 341–345, 354–360, also on Mesarites's and Stilbes's use of the term.

80 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 445, n. 108 (pp. 746–747).

81 For this generic tendency, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35. On this employment of the term "toparch," see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 2, p. 445, n. 113 (pp. 747–748); Zorzi (2012), p. 65.

82 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 411(81–3).

83 Brand (1968), p. 190; Eickhoff (1977), p. 73.

Philadelphiea in Asia Minor, whom Choniates characterizes as fools, tried to assail the Germans, only to realize that they were anything but easy prey.<sup>84</sup> This German strength is illustrated with the story of a gigantic “Alamann,” a “lion,” capable of superhuman deeds against the Turks.<sup>85</sup> The final part of Choniates’s account of Barbarossa’s crusade is marked by the explicitly sympathetic portrayal of the German ruler.<sup>86</sup>

## 2 Amerrigos (Henry VI) and Choniates’s *Kaiserkritik*

Henry VI, Barbarossa’s son, came to power in Germany in 1189 after his father’s departure toward the Holy Land.<sup>87</sup> As Henry gained enough significance for Byzantine historiography only in the 1190s, Choniates is the only one to speak of him. Unlike his father, Henry does not receive praise from Choniates, except once in the service of *Kaiserkritik*, as he, by contrast with Barbarossa, openly threatened to subjugate the empire, his intentions, however, being a different matter. Henry VI’s portrayal and that of his envoys equally serves criticism of emperors, especially Alexios III and Isaakios II. A comparison with other source material on Henry’s policies and personality reveals that Choniates’s remarks accord rather well. They can therefore be supposed to be based on reports that he consulted.<sup>88</sup>

Henry is called Ἀμερρίγος because Choniates preferred the alteration to something closer to the Western version, such as, for example, Ἐρρίκος. Choniates uses the same name for Amalric I of Jerusalem, but refers to Henry VI’s namesake, the Latin emperor Henry of Flanders, as Ἐρρήγης, perhaps to avoid the potentially confusing introduction of another Ἀμερρίγος.<sup>89</sup>

The constellation in Italy that Choniates and Kinnamos refer to as a dangerous scenario in Manouel’s time was realized in 1194, when Henry VI assumed

84 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 411(3)–412(17).

85 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 414(85)–415(15). See Lilie (2014), p. 207, who comments that “this episode is [...] greatly effective in its characterization of the tremendous strength of the Latins in general, and the Germans in particular, replete with mythical echoes engendered by Niketas’s diction.”

86 See Ch. 15, section 7, also for Choniates’s criticism of Byzantine failures against the Turks through his praise of Barbarossa’s success.

87 On Henry VI in general, see Csendes (1993); more recently Ehlers (2003).

88 On the image of Emperor Henry VI in contemporary sources, see Csendes (1993), pp. 218–225. See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 55, n. 123 (p. 461), on Choniates’s portrayal of Henry VI.

89 For Amalric of Jerusalem and Henry of Flanders, see Ch. 14, p. 388, and Ch. 15, p. 440.

the throne of Sicily after the death of his rival Tancred, who had allied with Isaakios II against the Holy Roman Emperor. Choniates explains that after Italy had been subjugated, Henry

also lay in wait for the Romans, but not straightforwardly and right away, for he eyed the difficulty of the undertaking with suspicion and still had in front of his eyes how much the Romans had proven themselves manly against the Sicilians who had invaded our [land], and he was no less drawn away from his purpose by the pope of Older Rome.<sup>90</sup>

Part of this presentation seems historically accurate. Modern scholarship agrees that the papacy was interested in limiting Hohenstaufen hegemony, as well as in retaining a maximum of political independence. In addition, any diversion of a crusade directed toward Palestine and Syria was something the papacy intended to avoid under all circumstances. Submitting the Byzantine Church to papal authority was of negligible importance in comparison, and it was not intended to be enforced by such means. The papacy was, therefore, firmly opposed to any plans of invasion.<sup>91</sup> However, the pope was aware that Henry did not seriously contemplate attacking Byzantium. The main obstacle to carrying out his threats was an acute lack of naval power. Most of the Sicilian fleet had been destroyed in the harbor of Messina when King Richard I of England captured the city on his way to the Holy Land. Henry's threats and demands were rather designed to obtain funds, as well as ships for a new crusade. If Alexios III took Henry's threats seriously, which is uncertain for the said reasons, it had to do with the fresh experience with the Sicilians and the Third Crusade. Both the king of Sicily and the Holy Roman Emperor had proven capable of endangering the empire's survival.<sup>92</sup>

Henry indeed presented himself not only as Roman emperor, but also as heir to his Norman predecessors. Because of this double inheritance, which closely followed recent hostile encounters in the mid to late 1180s, Henry must have appeared as a considerable threat to the Byzantines.<sup>93</sup> For that reason,

90 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 475(32)–476(42); see pp. 475(38)–476(42): “οὐκ ἀνέδην δὲ καὶ αὐτίκα Ῥωμαίοισιν ἐφεδρεύων, τὸ τῆς ἐγχειρήσεως ἐργῶδες ὑποβλεπόμενος καὶ ἔτι ἔχων τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς προκείμενα ὅποσα Ῥωμαῖοι κατὰ Σικελῶν ἠνδρίσαντο ἐς τὴν ἡμετέραν πρῶην παρεμβalonτων, καὶ παρὰ τοῦ πάπα δὲ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης οὐκ ἔλαττον ἀνασειραζόμενος τῆς προθέσεως.”

91 Naumann (1994), pp. 89–91, 94–95, 105; Neocleous (2015, 2019).

92 Brand (1968), pp. 191, 193–195; Naumann (1994), pp. 104–105; Kölzer (2013); Lounghis (2015a, 2015b); Hehl (2020), pp. 58–59.

93 Naumann (1994), pp. 92–93.



Choniates may have mentioned his imperial claim. He does so, however, without relating it directly to Byzantine imperial ideology, as Kinnamos had done in the case of Henry's father. Choniates might have omitted this because he was disillusioned with imperial ecumenical ideology and not because rival claims in combination with military power did not pose a threat. Indeed, he even mocks Byzantine ecumenism indirectly when he recounts Henry's death in 1197:

One could see that he was opposed to all pleasure and constantly brooded over how he would come into possession of universal rule and be the lord of all the realms round about. Reflecting on the Antonines and the Augusti Caesars, he aspired to extend his rule as far as theirs and all but recited the words attributed to Alexandros, 'All things here and there are mine.'<sup>94</sup>

This statement is comparable to vain visions of grandeur ascribed to Isaakios II, who according to Choniates said that "he would obtain universal rule and suckle the milk of the peoples" (μοναρχίαν περιβαλείται δήπουθεν και θηλάσει γάλα ἐθνῶν). Choniates's epiphany oration of 1190 presents similar aspirations.<sup>95</sup> Following the events of 1203–4, the historian asserted that after the restoration of his rule by the crusaders, Isaakios, blind and frail, foolishly dreamt of regaining his eyesight, recovering his former strength, and subjugating the world.<sup>96</sup> The history clearly suggests that Henry's rule, like the reigns of Byzantine emperors, ended prematurely as a result of divine intervention provoked by his tyranny and hubris.

Henry's rival imperial claims are alluded to in the passage that recounts the embassy of his envoys to Isaakios II. Henry demanded a high tribute and all the land from Dyrrachion to Thessalonike: "In addition, he requested, as if he were the king of all kings and lord of all lords, that they [the Byzantines] should aid his people in Palestine by sending a naval force."<sup>97</sup>

94 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 479(49)–480(54): "ἀεὶ μερίμναις κατατεινόμενος καὶ πρὸς ἅπασαν ἀντίξου ὀρώμενος ἡδυπάθειαν, ὅπως μοναρχίαν περιβαλείται καὶ κύριος ἐσεῖται τῶν κύκλων δυναστεϊῶν, τοὺς Ἀντωνίνους καὶ Αὐγούστους Καίσαρας τῷ διανοητικῷ φανταζόμενος καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνων ἀρχὴν ἐκτείνων τὴν ἔφεσιν, καὶ μικροῦ φθγγόμενος κατ' Ἀλέξανδρον „τὰ τῆδε καὶ τὰ τῆδε πάντα ἐμά.”

95 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 432(69–77); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 9, p. 94(11–16). On possible inspirations for the characterization of Henry VI, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 65, n. 153 (p. 468).

96 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 557(21)–558(40).

97 For the negotiations with Isaakios II, see also Pokorny (2006); Kölzer (2013), esp. pp. 90–91.

This remark, added to the history after 1204, comes closest to Henry's probable intentions.<sup>98</sup> The Holy Roman Emperor was preparing a crusade, for which he needed to raise money and a fleet.<sup>99</sup> That he aspired to subjugate Byzantium in some form in the future cannot be excluded, but he never considered it a prospect within reach.

The passage describing the reception of another embassy, this time under Alexios III, was also added after 1204 and is critical of the splendor of the court which, according to Choniates, vainly aimed to cover up the decline of imperial power. It also contains a direct reference to a claim to universal empire on Henry's part. Rather than being impressed by the imperial display, the Germans were emboldened to turn the empire's ecumenical ideology on its head. Alexios's efforts were thus counterproductive according to Choniates. Adopting the perspective of the envoys, a medium of his *Kaiserkritik*, he recounts: "If the affairs of the embassy would not come to a successful conclusion and if the Romans did not submit to the will of their master and emperor, then it would evidently be a necessity [for them] to give way in battle."<sup>100</sup> Henry's representation of universal imperial rule included overlordship of Byzantium, as did Barbarossa's letter written after Myriokephalon.<sup>101</sup>

Choniates's introspective criticism is also apparent in a series of anecdotes about Henry's life and rule recounted on the occasion of his early death, likewise from the ruler's perspective. Almost with approval, the history describes how he neglected to eat and drink, as he deemed the affairs of government more important.<sup>102</sup> The *Historia's* audience could be expected to compare this portrayal with the criticism of several Byzantine rulers who are described as

98 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 476(57–59, only in the a-text, see apparatus): "προσαπήτει δέ, ὡς εἰ κυρίων κύριος καθεισθήκει καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀναδέδεικται βασιλέων, συνάρασθαι τοῖς κατὰ Παλαιστίνην ὁμογενέσιν ἐκείνων δι' ἀποστολῆς ναυμαχικῆς στρατιᾶς."

99 Naumann (1994), pp. 96–100, 104–105; Kölzer (2013).

100 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 477(87–90, only in the a-text, see apparatus): "εἰ μὴ γὰρ τὰ τῆς πρεσβείας λήψονται πέρας καὶ πρὸς τὸ τοῦ κυρίου σφῶν καὶ βασιλέως συμβαίειν Ῥωμαῖοι βούλημα, ἀνάγκη τις ἐστάναι πάντως διὰ μάχης [...] χωρεῖν."

101 See above, p. 351.

102 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 480(54–60, only in the a-text, see apparatus), esp. p. 480(56–60): "He proclaimed and discerned that it was fitting for a private person to feast all day, especially if accustomed to eat greedily, but that it was a luxury for a prudential emperor, who was unwilling to falsify his name, to spend time with the recreation of the body, even if at around evening time" (ἀποφαινόμενός τε καὶ γνωματεύων ιδιώτῃ μὲν ἐπιτήθειον εἶναι πάντα καιρὸν εἰς ἐστίασιν, καὶ μάλιστα ἦν εἰώθει τενθεύεσθαι, βασιλεῖ δὲ πολυφρόντιδι μὴδὲ βουλομένῳ τὴν κλήσιν ψεύδεσθαι ἀγαπητόν, εἰ καὶ περὶ βουλυτὸν ἐνευκαιρήσει τῇ ἀνέσει τοῦ σώματος).

more than willing to indulge in sensual pleasures while neglecting the duties of their office.<sup>103</sup>

Again from the perspective of Henry's envoys, Choniates scolds his fellow *Graikoi*, whom he normally refers to as Romans, as weak and effeminate:

The Alamanni, however, were so far from appearing astonished by what they saw that they cherished more [than before] the desire which they kindled into a smoldering fire and which was burning with the blazing attire of the Romans, and they longed the sooner to rule over the Greeks, as they were cowardly in warfare and very eager for servile luxuries.<sup>104</sup>

The historian alludes to the prominent aristocratic virtue of military prowess.<sup>105</sup> In this context, the deriding of his fellow Byzantines as soft and effeminate and the display of such shameful models served as a provocation and challenge, especially against the Latin conquerors after 1204. Choniates's deconstruction of the splendor of the Byzantine court in this instance is thus another element of his narrative of imperial decline.<sup>106</sup>

The following, likewise related only in the a-version of the history, further accentuates the condemning criticism of Alexios III's role in the negotiations with Henry. The imperial envoy Philokales convinced the Germans to lower the tribute owed to Henry. But Alexios declared his inability to raise the full sum, and therefore introduced a special tax, the so-called *Ἀλαμανικόν*, i.e., German tax. He also assembled (presumably rich) inhabitants of Constantinople, senators, the clergy, and representatives of various professions to ask them

103 See esp. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 54(65–74 [Manouel]), 321(20)–323(74 [Andronikos]), 441(9)–442(32 [Isaakios II]), 459(68–77), 540(28–29 [Alexios III]), 537(53–55 [both Isaakios II and Alexios III]). The accusation of incest against Manouel as well as the allegation that he was punished for his excesses with a disease, visible in his face, was added only after 1204. The addition might have served to reinforce the message that the conquest of 1204 was divine retribution for Byzantine sins. Moreover, restraint in eating, drinking, and sleeping habits and, more generally, willingness to suffer and endure hardship for the good of the polity was described as imperial virtue, notably by Eustathios of Thessalonike. See e.g., EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Funeral Oration*, §§ 54–60; Stone (2000), pp. 263–265.

104 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 477(74–78, only in the a-text, see apparatus): “οἱ δ’ Ἀλαμανοὶ τοσοῦτον ἀπέχον ἔκθαμβοὶ τοῖς ὀρωμένοις τούτοις φανῆναι, ὥστε καὶ ἀνέθαλπον μᾶλλον τὸν ἔρωτα, ὃν ὑπέτυφον ταῖς λαμπριμονίαις τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐναυόμενον, καὶ ἤϋχοντο τάχιον κρατῆσαι Γραικῶν ὡς ἀγεγνῶν τὰ ἐς πόλεμον καὶ περισπουδαζόντων τὰς ἀνδραποδώδεις χλιδᾶς.” On the German embassy, see also Anca (2010), pp. 184–190.

105 For this aspect, see Ch. 1, p. 37.

106 Kaldellis (2009a), pp. 90–91.

to voluntarily contribute additional funds. All Alexios accomplished was to provoke them to complain about his mismanagement of imperial revenues. He therefore resorted to an attempt to confiscate Church property, which was denied. Ultimately, he removed all precious objects from the imperial tombs. Criticism of this measure is reinforced by the remark that the two men whom Alexios asked to plunder the tombs soon fell mortally ill, thus suffering divine punishment for their wicked deeds.<sup>107</sup> Choniates likely knew that Henry's threats were not as dangerous as they appeared,<sup>108</sup> and that Alexios had the ulterior motive of filling the treasury by pretending that paying tribute was unavoidable.

The *Historia* celebrates Henry's death in 1197 as resulting from divine grace and he constructs an illustrative, introspective tale around it. It recounts that both the Byzantines and Henry's own subjects were relieved.<sup>109</sup> Henry is again characterized as a megalomaniac aspiring to universal rule. Even if his rule is not explicitly referred to as tyrannical, it is implied, for the behavior Choniates describes is clearly that of a tyrant of the brand of Isaakios Komnenos of Cyprus or the infamous Andronikos. In emphasizing that the "Sicilians" in particular suffered under his rule, Choniates may have had the Greek-speaking inhabitants of the kingdom of Sicily in mind. Murders, plundering, banishment, and "unbearable punishments, which made dying preferable to living" were among the evils for which Henry was responsible. Choniates attributes Henry's harsh rule to fear that the Sicilians would revolt against him and reclaim their freedom.<sup>110</sup> It is implied that such fear is characteristic of a tyrant. The history alludes among other things to the sack of Salerno in September 1194, as well as the treatment of William III and Richard of Acerra.<sup>111</sup> An attempt on his life was the consequence of this course of action. The culprits were subjected to torture, which Choniates expounds in detail. The cruelest punishment is said to have been inflicted on the leader of the conspiracy, identified as the castellan of Castrogiovanni by Latin sources.<sup>112</sup> His painful humiliation consisted of

107 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 478(14)–479(43).

108 See above, p. 358.

109 Choniates echoes psalm 105(2). See also p. 481(95–1): "[...] this evil, too, was removed by the will of God, it was extremely great and from it the whole [empire] of the Romans expected to suffer the very worst" (Ἄλλ' ἐκποδῶν καὶ τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ θεόθεν γεγενημένου, μεγίστου τε ὄντος καὶ ὑφ' οὗ πάντα ἢ Ῥωμαίων ἐκαραδόκει τὰ δεινότατα πείσσεσθαι).

110 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 479(44)–480(72).

111 Csendes (1993), pp. 149, 156, 187–188.

112 Csendes (1993), p. 191.

a crown being nailed to his head.<sup>113</sup> Such rigorous punishment of the conspirators is confirmed by other sources.<sup>114</sup>

The descriptions fit the image of a tyrant that Choniates conveys and are consistent with the historian's tendency to include vivid descriptions of the horrors of war and the cruelty of his rulers and fellow Byzantines. That he made changes and introduced additions after the sack of 1204, which he represents as divine punishment of the sins of Byzantines, and especially emperors, might suggest that he deemed Henry's misdeeds and fate to be an appropriate illustration of such divine retribution.<sup>115</sup>

The historian thus took an interest in the events in Sicily in the context of the conquest of 1204, in which the marriage of Eirene, the daughter of Isaakios II, to Henry's younger brother Philip of Swabia in 1197 played a role.<sup>116</sup> Eirene had previously been married to King Tancred's son and co-ruler Roger III in an alliance against Henry,<sup>117</sup> and Choniates explains that his brother's marriage to Isaakios's daughter was an asset Henry could count on in his dealings with Byzantium.<sup>118</sup> The support of Philip and Eirene for her brother Alexios's claim to the Byzantine throne had been a factor in the Fourth Crusade, as Choniates was well aware,<sup>119</sup> and may have been the reason for Choniates's defamatory addition that Philip was begotten "from whorish seeds" (ἐκ πορνικῶν σπερμάτων).<sup>120</sup> Boniface of Montferrat seems to have contemplated sending

113 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 480(73)–481(88).

114 Csendes (1993), pp. 190–191; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 67, n. 159 (pp. 469–470).

115 Magdalino (1993b), p. 14. Other examples include not only Constantinople's fall in 1204, but also the Latin defeat at Adrianople in 1205 (see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 585[49–57]).

116 On Philip of Swabia and his role in the Fourth Crusade and its diversion to Constantinople, see Csendes (2003); Maleczek (2013).

117 This matrimonial alliance is celebrated by SERGIOS KOLYBAS, *Encomia* of 1193, p. 289(6–12), putting an emphasis on the altered relationship between Sicily of Romania and the transformation of the former from an enemy into an ally. See also Stephenson (2000), p. 302.

118 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 481(89–94). See also Brand (1968), pp. 190, 195, Csendes (1993), p. 145, 156. The allegation that Roger ruled Sicily after Tancred is historically inaccurate, because he predeceased his father, as observed in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 67, n. 160 (p. 470). As in many similar cases, it can be suspected that this imprecision occurred because the exact circumstances were of no relevance to the agenda of Choniates's work.

119 See esp. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 537(45–48), 539(6–11).

120 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 481(91–92) and p. 481(91–92 b). No other source seems to support this allegation: see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 67, n. 160 (p. 470).

the former emperor Alexios III and his wife to Philip in 1205, ultimately preferring Montferrat.<sup>121</sup>

121 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 620(67–70): “And Alexios, miserable among emperors, and his wife Euphrosyne he [Boniface] sent out across the sea to the ruler of the Alamanni. Alas, oh, what a new and unheard-of report among the Romans but also, so to speak, what a spectacle unseen until now!” (καὶ τὸν δυσπραγῆ ἐν βασιλεύουσιν Ἀλέξιον καὶ τὴν τούτου σύνευρον Εὐφροσύνην διαποντίους τῷ τῶν Ἀλαμανῶν ἐξέπεμψεν ἄρχοντι. φεῦ φεῦ τοῦ καινοῦ τοῦδε καὶ ἀνηκούστου παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις ἀκούσματος, εἰπεῖν δὲ καὶ ἀθεάτου ἐς δεῦρο θεάματος). See, however, p. 612(41–45 LO): “The emperor Alexios, coming to the aspect of the marquess [of Montferrat] under oaths, was not received in a fashion worthy of either his noble family or the Roman rule from which he had fallen. Rather, the marquess rendered the oaths sworn to him ineffectual and he was sent away to Lampardia [Lombardy] as if he were a prisoner of war” (ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξιος τῷ μαρκεσίῳ μεθ’ ὄρκων εἰς ὄψιν ἐλθῶν οὔτε τοῦ γένους καὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς ἀρχῆς, ἧς ἐξέπεσεν, ἀξίως προσδέχεται. μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν καὶ τοὺς πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄρκους τοῦ μαρκεσίου ἀθετήσαντος εἰς Λαμπαρδίαν ὡς εἰς τῶν δορικτῆτων ἀπάγεται). Ultimately, the couple was ransomed by the ruler of Epirus in ca. 1209, Alexios ending his life in Nicaea, Euphrosyne in Arta. For possible interpretations of the apparent contradiction in the *Historia*, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 339, n. 174 (pp. 606–607).

## Victories over “Huns” (Hungarians) Diminished and Magnified

In their treatment of the relationship between Romania and Hungary, an important immediate neighbor,<sup>1</sup> Kinnamos and Choniates devote dissimilar amounts of space.<sup>2</sup> The reason for this is that the emperor Manouel achieved successes on the Hungarian front, which were also celebrated in imperial panegyric. The topic was suitable for an encomiastically oriented history. Kinnamos's Hungarian focus thus resembles Anna Komnene's extensive treatment of her father's Norman opponents. Choniates's limited interest, by contrast, is illustrated by chronological and other imprecisions.<sup>3</sup> Characteristically, however, both historians remain largely generic and introspective and display no major interest in the perspective of the Hungarian side.<sup>4</sup>

Choniates's portrayal of relations with Hungary to a degree attests to their political relevance. Less glorifying than Kinnamos, he gives Ioannes and Manouel credit, especially Ioannes. This is in line with Choniates's tendency to portray Ioannes II's reign and Manouel's earlier years more positively.<sup>5</sup> He echoes Kinnamos in noting that the Hungarians broke treaties and oaths multiple times, thus justifying the wars against them. An additional justification is the murder of King Stephen IV (1165).<sup>6</sup>

1 On the relations between Hungary and Romania during the long twelfth century, see Moravcsik (1929/1930, 1967, 1970); Kerbl (1979); Makk (1989); Magdalino (1993b), *passim*; Stephenson (2000); Carile (2008); Sággy and Ousterhout (2019).

2 About one-sixth of the entirety of Kinnamos's work is devoted to the empire's Hungarian relations, mainly wars. Choniates does not come anywhere near that, neither in the history as a whole nor in the books devoted to Ioannes's and Manouel's reigns. For the historians' portrayal of the empresses of Hungarian origin and the Hungarian princes who spent a part of their lives in Romania as well as Bela III's reign, see the first section of Ch. 3 and Ch. 5.

3 On imprecisions in Choniates's account, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 166–167; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 211, n. 1 (p. 597). For Anna's portrayal of the Hautevilles and Normans more generally, see the first section of Ch. 9.

4 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

5 See the description of Ioannes's reaction to a Hungarian incursion: NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 17(39)–18(69). On Manouel, see pp. 92(29)–93(71), 100(46)–102(87).

6 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 132(27–30), 133(52–54), 151(59–62). For Stephen IV's murder, see also Ch. 5, p. 199.

More than Kinnamos, the *Historia* offers criticism of the Byzantine side in various instances, including the cowardice and incompetence of the Byzantine commanders Gabras and Branas and an attempt to rape a Hungarian woman during the capture of Zeugminon, her husband preventing the deed by killing her. Moreover, Choniates relates the story of a Byzantine slaying a Hungarian without just cause. The soldier paid for this sin, however; he was killed, thought to be an enemy because he had put on his victim's gear.<sup>7</sup>

The most extensive description is devoted to Manouel's final Hungarian campaign (1167). Noteworthy in this account is the criticism of the emperor for his astrological beliefs that induced him to have the Byzantine commander Andronikos Kontostephanos postpone the decisive battle.<sup>8</sup> Kontostephanos's speech before the battle represents an expression of social status from the perspective of a literatus rather than of Byzantine soldiers.<sup>9</sup> Choniates underlines that the Hungarian army under its commander Dénes—Hellenized as Dionysios<sup>10</sup>—was fearsome to behold and numerous. Their only major weakness was their corresponding overconfidence. Kontostephanos won a splendid victory, followed by an equally splendid triumph in the capital. That this triumph goes unmentioned in Kinnamos's encomiastic narrative may indicate that he left his work unfinished.<sup>11</sup> Choniates implies that the Byzantines could still defeat a powerful enemy, provided they remember their own virtues and advantages, which they often failed to do according to him. Worthy of note is Choniates's remark concerning two statues in the capital's Forum of Konstantinos, one named "Roman" (Ῥωμαία), the other "Hungarian" (Οὐγγρισσα), illustrating the supernatural power ascribed to statues also brought up elsewhere in the *Historia*. The emperor ordered the fallen statue, the Ῥωμαία, raised, and the standing Οὐγγρισσα pulled down in order to keep the "barbarians" in check, thus attempting to reverse an omen foretelling the decline of the Byzantine Empire according to the general tendency of Choniates's narrative. In addition to pointing to the significance of beliefs in prophetic predictions, this passage may signal that, at least in the empire's better days, energetic emperors such as Manouel, or courageous Byzantines more generally, could reverse a bad situation rather than submitting to fate.<sup>12</sup>

7 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 132(27)–136(46).

8 See also Ch. 5, pp. 188–189.

9 See Ch. 8, p. 238.

10 Zorzi (2012), p. 230.

11 Zorzi (2012), pp. 234–235.

12 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 151(59)–158(81). On the statues, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 230–231; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 315, n. 2 (pp. 644–645). There is no other evidence of the statues, which suggests that, if Choniates's account is



With his usual hyperbolic descriptions, Kinnamos celebrates Byzantine victories.<sup>13</sup> In keeping with his encomiastic tendencies, Manouel is glorified as a war hero and inspiring general with superhuman abilities, with his father receiving praise as well, although Kinnamos includes veiled if moderate criticism of Ioannes, probably with the intention of magnifying Manouel's accomplishments.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding a female informant of Ioannes II, it remains doubtful whether her gender and Latin origin, which Kinnamos mentions, were truly considered shameful by him or his intended audience, as alleged by Stephenson—perhaps under the doubtful hypothesis of a pervasive “anti-Latin” bias in Byzantine literary sources. She is referred to in rather positive terms as “outstanding in wealth and other distinction” (πλουτότῳ δὲ καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ περιφανείᾳ διαφέρουσα).<sup>15</sup>

Kinnamos gives occasional background information concerning Hungarian customs, notably the succession to the throne and titles. As in comparable instances, this is not a deviation from Byzantine literary genericism because it merely provides a varied and entertaining illustration to the primary imperial narrative. The description of the Hungarian campaigns focuses on matters of warfare and valiant Byzantine deeds, particularly Manouel's, but also reflects Kinnamos's personal participation, to which he attests.<sup>16</sup>

The Christian faith of the Hungarians is never called into question, even if there is reference to impure beliefs. Kinnamos distinguishes them from the Χαλῆσιοι, allies of the Hungarians described as heterodox. They were probably Jewish Khazars.<sup>17</sup>

More so than Choniates, Kinnamos emphasizes the violation of oaths and treaties on the part of the Hungarians and their rulers Geza II (Γεζᾶς) and Stephen III, thereby adopting the rhetoric of imperial panegyric emphasizing Byzantine superiority and overlordship of Hungary. While the Hungarians lack constancy, the emperor, merciful and magnanimous, defeats and forgives them

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historical, they were known under different names outside the context of the Hungarian war. For the historian's attitude toward prophetic predictions, see Ch. 1, p. 33.

13 E.g. IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 114(7)–115(13).

14 E.g. IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 108(1)–112(14), 240(15)–24(16). For Ioannes II's campaign, see pp. 9(10)–13(9); Stephenson (2000), p. 208. The mere rumor of Manouel's approach is said to have terrified the enemy. Whatever occurred, it suits the image of the emperor that Kinnamos conveys. The source employed by Choniates plausibly pursued a similar encomiastic aim. See IOANNES KINNAMOS, p. 132(12–18); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 102(83–87).

15 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 12(18–21); Stephenson (2000), p. 208.

16 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 107(8–16), 247(14–17).

17 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 86, n. 22 (p. 244).

repeatedly, thus demonstrating his superiority. After a first major defeat, Geza offered friendship (φιλία) and enrollment among the allies of the Byzantines forever—the terminology suggesting the status of a subordinate or client ruler. Quickly relapsing into hostility, he was defeated again, only to repeat the process, confirming his faithlessness (ἀπιστία).<sup>18</sup> The succession dispute after Geza's death (1162) is characterized by Manouel's ambition to assert his overlordship of Hungary, making use of a favorable opportunity.<sup>19</sup> Stephen III is said to have emulated his father in breaking oaths and agreements. The Hungarians are even said to treat oaths as playthings (παίγνια). Like the Hungarian kings, their ally Vladislaus, ruler of the Czechs (Bohemia), is accused of having disregarded his allegiance (λίζιον) pledged to the emperor during his expedition to the Holy Land.<sup>20</sup> When the Hungarians attacked Sirmion they dishonored their oaths again. Manouel warned Stephen of the consequences and acted with determination to assemble allies. Stephen is abused in strong terms to Jaroslav of Galicia, reinforcing the contrast between the emperor's greatness and the meanness of the Hungarian monarchs.<sup>21</sup>

Kinnamos reveals that he personally participated in a campaign in 1165, which gives weight to his assurance that the emperor's leadership was inspirational, his zeal great, and daring unbelievable, something only to be observed by an eyewitness.

The historian then indicates some empathy for and proximity with the Hungarian side, while continuing to focus on Manouel's glorification and exculpation for misfortunes during the war. Like Choniates, he criticizes, without blaming Manouel, the sack of Zeugminon by the Byzantines in 1165, saying that the inhabitants were slaughtered like sheep and commenting on the evils voluntarily committed by humankind. Kinnamos greatly emphasizes the cruelty of the sack by stating the spectacle caused him to weep.<sup>22</sup> The account of subsequent peace negotiations again mentions Hungarian perjury and transgression of agreements, and emphasizes the *basileus's* magnanimity but importantly stresses that because they are Christians, Manouel's adversaries are granted mercy. The Byzantines successfully occupied Dalmatia, and the *basileus* celebrated a triumph in Constantinople. While Hungarians and Serbs

18 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 119(16)–120(10), 121(11–18), 130(23)–134(10).

19 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 202(17)–203(21). For Kinnamos's and Choniates's account of the succession crisis, see Ch. 5, pp. 197–199.

20 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 222(4)–224(3).

21 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 231(6)–232(11), 235(1)–237(6).

22 Personal digressions involving the shedding of tears are rare in Byzantine historiography: see the references in Ch. 12, p. 349, n. 50.

readied themselves for another attack, Manouel advanced quickly against them, inducing them to retreat,<sup>23</sup> a mere foreshadowing of the final confrontation that took place in 1166–67. Kinnamos recounts that it went badly at first, but puts the blame on the Byzantine commanders Gabras and Branas. He also blames the general disunity among the Byzantines, again without implicating Manouel in his criticism. Being fearful of the Hungarian general Dénes, they are represented as in great need of the fearless *basileus*. Like Choniates, Kinnamos describes the Hungarian force as strong and confident, in order to celebrate the heroic deeds accomplished by the *Rōmaioi* in the final battle. Their adversaries are referred to as barbarians but assimilated, not only by their Christianity. Manouel’s naval force is said to have captured about 800 prisoners, including five of their leaders—Kinnamos explains that they were called ζουπάνοι (*župans*)—and “many of those who were well-born and distinguished also in other respects” (πολλοὶ τῶν εὖ γεγονότων καὶ ἄλλως διαφανῶν). He thus enhances the scale of the Byzantine victory but also points to *eugeneia* as a shared marker of identity of Byzantine and Hungarian aristocrats.<sup>24</sup> As for the reference to the title of *župan*, it is again indicative of Kinnamos’s tendency to contextualize his encomiastic imperial narrative with illustrative references and stories.<sup>25</sup>

23 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 238(6)–249(22).

24 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 257(17)–265(13), 270(2)–274(22).

25 See Ch. 1, p. 49.

## Divine Retribution, Disruption, and Continuities

### *The Conquerors of Romania (Fourth Crusade)*

Choniates's account of the Fourth Crusade and its aftermath remains largely generic and the image of the invaders who conquered the capital and other parts of the Byzantine Empire is subordinated to the history's introspective agenda, with occasional discussion of Western crusading ideals and cultural elements.<sup>1</sup> It is an expression of the need to deal with a traumatic experience—particularly for Choniates—and to identify its causes: divine providence and Byzantine vice. The narrative of events following the fall of the city continues to insist on the wickedness of fellow *Rōmaioi* and censures them for refusing to set aside differences in favor of a united front against the Latins. It is a testimony to and condemnation of differing Byzantine concerns, identities, notably local and provincial, and varying responses to the Latin conquest. Choniates and his contemporaries who expressed similar views demonstrate that many Byzantines did not share their attachment to the old empire and its restoration, that circumstances sometimes favored collaboration and arrangement with the Latin newcomers. The Fourth Crusade did not alter many characteristic features of Choniates's representation of Latins. It would only be later in the thirteenth century that some Byzantine literati would devote greater attention to Western culture and literature.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the conquest had a profound

1 For the generic and introspective tendency of Byzantine literature, see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

2 On the Fourth Crusade and the first years of Frankish rule in general, see Angold (1975, 2003); Carile (1978); Lock (1995); Queller and Madden (1997); Hendrickx (2007); Van Tricht (2011); Herrin and Saint-Guillain (2011); Chrissis (2012), esp. ch. 1; Douru-Eilopoulou (2012); Burkhardt (2014); Tsougarakis and Lock (2015); Demacopoulos (2019). For reviews illuminating the critical aspects in the studies of Van Tricht and Burkhardt, notably the thesis of a strong continuity between the Byzantine and Latin Empires, see Angold (2013); Grünbart (2016b). For further references—the bibliography is vast—see the literature cited in the Introduction, p. 11, n. 42. Specifically for Choniates's take on the crusade and the conquest of 1204, see Bossina (2004, 2006, 2009b); Koder (2005); Simpson (2006); (2013), esp. pp. 314–329; Kaldellis (2009a); Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a, 2010b); Papadopoulou (2012). An interesting parallel source is NIKOLAOS MESARITES (Epitaphios; Dossier on the Patriarchate; Lenten Sermon of 1215). Mesarites displays a similar outlook and motivations to Choniates in vilifying and condemning the Latin conquerors while allowing for nuance and stressing the role of Byzantine sins in bringing about the fall of the capital, as did other contemporaries like Patriarch Ioannes x (see Angold [2017], pp. 251–252).

and permanent effect on Byzantine identities. For example, the expression of Byzantine religious identity became inextricably linked with attitudes toward Latin Christians. It is also conceivable to see the vilification of the conquerors as a reflection of something new: a kind of colonial encounter, as argued by George Demacopoulos. While Demacopoulos rightly acknowledges that attitudes of superiority at least of upper strata withstood the conquest, he argues that the Byzantines did experience, to a degree, a colonial power: the conquest itself and the preservation of the conquered polities necessitated continuous legitimization and justification by the conquerors, part of which was the vilification, deprecation or humiliation of the “Greeks” in religious and other respects, which, to the degree that it occurred and was perceived by them, did cause lasting resentment and reaction, and hardened markers of difference and boundaries.<sup>3</sup> Pope Innocent III’s response to the sack of Constantinople deemed such resentment justified and his description and condemnation of the atrocities is remarkably similar to Choniates’s. Nevertheless, like Choniates, the pope interpreted the conquest as God’s will and punishment for Byzantine sins—even if Innocent blamed different sins—and thus an obligation to establish Latin polities and Church structures.<sup>4</sup>

The conquest therefore had a lasting effect in disrupting far-reaching possibilities that the fickle relations of the long twelfth century had offered—particularly under Manuel with his extensive network of alliances and kinship with Western powers. Under different circumstances, this network might well have lasted and greatly contributed to a different development of Byzantine-Western relations, including greater mutual understanding and fruitful cultural and religious exchange. Alliances and kinship with Western dynasties only became fatal due to political upheavals within the empire after 1180 and the entanglement of Western powers in Byzantine conflicts. The 1204 sack of Constantinople was by no means the necessary result of the previous relations, and, as will be shown, Choniates makes this clear.

## 1 Shattering Pillars of Identity: The Capture and Sack of the Imperial City

The generic and introspective character of Choniates’s account of the Fourth Crusade is strongly marked by the historian’s agenda, already expressed by his

3 Demacopoulos (2019); Neocleous (2019), pp. 215–217.

4 Neocleous (2019), pp. 184–187.

omission of the role of the pope<sup>5</sup> in favor of that of Doge Enrico Dandolo. The history relates that initially “independent” (αὐτομάτως) of Dandolo’s designs, some Latin nobles (*eugeneis*) intended to go to the Holy Land, including Boniface of Montferrat, Baldwin of Flanders, Hugh of Saint-Pol (“Erikos, count of Saint Paulos”) and Louis, count of Blois (“the count of Plees, Doloikos”).<sup>6</sup> The characterization of Enrico Dandolo, doge of Venice (1192–1205), is particularly hostile in this instance.<sup>7</sup> While Choniates holds his fellow Byzantines responsible for the fall of Constantinople and sees Dandolo’s actions as a result of Byzantine mistakes, he does blame him. However, the epilogue of the *Historia* states that ultimately only God knew why the city fell.<sup>8</sup> Dandolo, “a man disabled in his vision and aged by time, most treacherous and envious with regard to the Romans, who, a matter of subtlety and imposture, would refer to himself as smarter than the smart” (ἀνὴρ πηρὸς μὲν τὰς ὄψεις καὶ τῷ χρόνῳ πέμπελος, ἐπιβουλότατον δὲ πράγμα Ῥωμαίοις καὶ φθονερώτατον, ὃς παιπάλημα ὦν ἀγυρτείας καὶ φρονιμώτερον τῶν φρονιμῶν ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζων), “mad for fame” (δοξομανῶν) like no one else, deemed it a crime worthy of death not to punish the Byzantines for their misdeeds against the Venetians. Choniates reaffirms Dandolo’s crucial role in the fall of the city by stating that the doge was the “the most ancient and crafty evil, cause of all abominable [things that befell] the Romans” (ἀρχαιότατον καὶ πολυτροπώτατον κακὸν καὶ τῶν ἀπευκταίων πάντων Ῥωμαίοις πρωτουργὸν αἴτιον).<sup>9</sup> Dandolo, most of all Latin conquerors, personifies the punishment due for Romania. Knowing that it was not in the interest of the Venetians to rely solely on their own forces to confront the Byzantines, he found fellow-conspirators (συνωμόται), namely “those of whom he knew that they nurtured an inexorable hatred toward the Romans and gazed at their fortunes with malice and lust” (οὓς ἤδει πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἄσπονδον μίσος τρέφοντας καὶ τοῖς τούτων καλοῖς βάσκανον καὶ λίχνον ἐνατενίζοντας).<sup>10</sup> Choniates’s phrasing, once again, is colored by hindsight.<sup>11</sup>

5 The vague reference to the pope also points to a lack of interest in the situation in the West before the Fourth Crusade and the stance of the papacy, which were immaterial to what Choniates intended to convey. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 193, n. 253 (pp. 532–533).

6 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 191, nn. 244–247 (p. 531).

7 On Enrico Dandolo, see the references in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 189, n. 240 (pp. 530–531).

8 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 647(6–7).

9 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 616(62)–617(64). On the phrasing, associated with the devil, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 349, n. 192 (p. 609).

10 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 538(72)–539(91).

11 On the more probable motives of Venetians and crusaders, see Lilie (2008) and Neocleous (2012a), the latter arguing persuasively that the main motivation was financial, at least on

Choniates's description of the impressive and warlike appearance of the crusaders was likely meant to stress the magnitude of God's punishment of the Byzantines. It also alleges, perhaps inspired by Pindar,<sup>12</sup> that their height corresponded to the length of their lances, and gives the following exaggerated figures for their infantry: "1,000 knights and 30,000 foot soldiers, especially impressive the so-called crossbowmen."<sup>13</sup> Choniates, inaccurately, affirms that it took three years to build the Venetian fleet—he could have provided reliable information but, as this was unrelated to his historiographical message, did not find it worthwhile.<sup>14</sup>

Choniates further develops the image of the fearsome crusaders when he narrates their advance,<sup>15</sup> although he is less pronounced about their strength than about the cowardice of the Byzantine soldiers. It was Choniates's intention after 1204 to exhort his fellow Byzantines to resist the conquerors—at least those susceptible to the Constantinopolitan imperial attitude and identity represented by his history<sup>16</sup>—by highlighting Byzantine faults such as cowardice, disunity, poor morale, selfishness, and bad leadership.

He laments that the young Alexios allowed the crusaders to subject Byzantium to religious deviations and papal claims. However, historiography of the long twelfth century, Choniates included, portrays Latins as Christians, with few references to religious differences. The lament reflects a new situation of being ruled by Latin Christians, but overall Choniates represents Byzantine ambivalence toward Latin Christianity after 1204 in his history and religious work, the *Πανοπλία δογματική*. In contrast to the history, the *Πανοπλία* is concerned with finding common religious ground (*κοινωνία*) and reaffirming Byzantine orthodoxy against charges of heresy by the Latins, identifying the procession of the Holy Spirit (*filioque*) as the one truly significant difference. The *Πανοπλία* focuses on Byzantine scholars who adopt irenic stances

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the part of the leadership, and that the conquest of the city was the last resort rather than the initial plan for solving the financial impasse. Angold (2003), p. 152, and Van Tricht (2017) tend to exaggerate Venetian interests in ousting the Byzantine emperors because the Venetians could not know at the time if it would turn to their advantage, as Angold himself argues (pp. 247–249).

12 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 191, n. 248 (p. 531).

13 On the word *τζάγγρα* (crossbow) and the historical significance of this powerful weapon, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 193, n. 252 (p. 532). See *ibid.*; Queller and Madden (1997), chs. 2 and 4; Angold (2003), pp. 80–82, for the size of the crusader army and the Venetian fleet.

14 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 539(91–4). See Queller and Madden (1997), pp. 17, 44.

15 For the story of Alexios Angelos's escape to the West, narrated also in this instance, see Ch. 2, pp. 111–112.

16 This background to Choniates's criticism will be addressed in more detail below.

regarding Latin Christianity and accuses certain Byzantines of attaching too much importance to secondary questions. Choniates thus adapted his approach according to context and the *Πανοπλία* recognizes the need for Byzantines under Latin rule to find an arrangement with new masters in a situation that made religious differences more politically relevant than before 1204.<sup>17</sup>

The emphasis of the narrative before Alexios III's escape is on his poor leadership and the fact that he resisted the Latins only when constrained by the populace to do so. A positive reference to the future emperor Theodoros Laskaris's bravery and eagerness to fight was removed in the a-version, i.e., when Choniates had become disillusioned with the Byzantine government in Nicaea. All that remains is the bitter abuse of Alexios III. Even while acknowledging some virtues of the emperor, he not only censures him but indicates that the treason he committed against his brother Isaakios, i.e., blinding and deposing him in 1195, was a major cause of his ruin, reinforcing the message that the Byzantines themselves were more to blame for the fall of the city than the crusaders, instruments of divine retribution. Byzantine wickedness caused God to direct the Latin army against Romania and weaken the will of the empire's inhabitants to respond effectively.<sup>18</sup>

Choniates indicates later in the narrative that the Latins were far from invincible and that it was a lack of brave resolve that brought about Byzantine ruin. During the reign of Isaakios II and Alexios IV, the invaders landed on the coasts of the city to plunder but were repulsed. Encouraged by these partial successes, the populace sought to persuade Alexios IV to go on the offensive against the unwelcome guests. Alexios is blamed, along with Isaakios and leading aristocrats, for refusing due to their connivance with and cowardly fear of the Latins.<sup>19</sup> The history argues against a military confrontation with the

17 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 539(5)–543(89). On religious relations after 1204 and Choniates's *Πανοπλία δογματική*, see Lock (1995), ch. 8; Angold (2003), chs. 8–9; Bossina (2004, 2006, 2009b); Van Tricht (2011), ch. 6; Simpson (2013), pp. 36–50; Coureas (2015).

18 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 543(90)–550(33). See also pp. 544(19 PLO), 546(65 PLO), referring to Laskaris; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 201, n. 289 (p. 539), and p. 205, n. 305 (p. 342). Choniates worked as *literatus* for Theodoros Laskaris, but his history and surviving letters reveal that he did not obtain a satisfactory post in the polity of Nicaea. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 644(54)–645(88); the commentary in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 411, n. 359 (p. 635); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, nos. 13, 14, 16, 17; *Letters*, esp. nos. 2–10; Angelov (2007), pp. 39–40. See also the LO-version of the history (pp. 635[95 LO]–636[65 LO]); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 389, n. 294 (pp. 623–624).

19 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 560(90)–561(22).



crusaders later in the narrative, albeit with hindsight. However, after Alexios IV's loss of control of the capital and after his removal, the political order may have appeared so wretched to Choniates that he considered any attempt at an effective defense futile.<sup>20</sup> Alexios IV is bitterly abused for his acceptance of the extreme demands of the Latins and the "humiliations of the august imperial office" (τοῦ βασιλείου ὕψους καταστροφαί)—compared to Manouel, Alexios's dependence on the crusaders could be portrayed as utter weakness.

The reference to the "Roman-hating attitude of the Latins" (μισορρώμαιοι φρόνημα τῶν Λατίνων), which Alexios ignored, is colored by hindsight. Neocleous's examination of the evidence convincingly shows that the chief motivation of the crusaders was financial, not "anti-Byzantine." Given the resistance of the Byzantines to providing the necessary funds, the demands of the Latin intruders were difficult to fulfill, however. In contrast, the submission of the Byzantine Church to the papacy is advanced with hindsight by Western sources as a justification of the conquest, and beforehand as an argument for the diversion of the crusade in exchanges with Pope Innocent III, who, however, unequivocally rejected this argument as well as the crusade's diversion.<sup>21</sup>

Interestingly, the pope, who goes unmentioned, is not explicitly held responsible, which perhaps reflects this opposition to the diversion of the crusade and later Innocent's condemnation of Constantinople's sack—some less-well-informed Byzantines probably saw the pope as the driving force behind the conquest.<sup>22</sup> A parallel case is the *Alexiad*, which, due to its historiographical agenda, also fails to refer to Urban II as instigator of the First Crusade, preferring to lay the blame for what it portrays as a hostile invasion of Romania on the leaders of the crusaders and above all Bohemond.<sup>23</sup>

Without acknowledging the financial constraints of the crusaders, the history has harsh words for their and Alexios IV's plundering in Thrace. This narrative, too, is colored by the subsequent sack of Constantinople.<sup>24</sup> Choniates particularly condemns Alexios's and Isaakios's efforts to raise money by confiscating sacred church treasures for the Latins, whose greed he laments was nothing inferior to that of an ox. However, he also regrets his own failure—as

20 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 561(33)–562(53), 566(27–28), 567(63)–568(70). See also below, pp. 377–378.

21 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 550(39)–551(47). See Neocleous (2012a, 2015).

22 Gastgeber (2004); Neocleous (2015); (2019), pp. 188–189, with reference to Innocent's mention of such accusations.

23 See Ch. 10, p. 309.

24 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 556(78–92). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 225, nn. 48, 50 (p. 553).

a high-ranking member of the imperial administration—to stop these atrocities. Again with hindsight of the severe damage done to the city, the center of Choniates's life and that of his peers, the conquerors are called “barbarians sent by the Keren [dogs or demons of death] who have no love for beauty” (τοῦ καλοῦ ἀνέραστοι κηρεσιφόρητοι βάρβαροι).<sup>25</sup>

Choniates accordingly chose a barbarian topos to describe the conquerors, affirming that there is no greedier, more gluttonous, or wasteful people than the Latins.<sup>26</sup> Further developing the theme of Byzantine wickedness, the *Historia* suggests that God might have spared Constantinople from a Latin occupation had Alexios not decided to plunder sacred treasures from churches and monasteries to meet the demands of his allies and had the emperor's subjects—Choniates includes himself and his peers—seriously attempted to prevent him.<sup>27</sup>

The history also bitterly condemns the populace, which, by attacking the Pisans and Amalfitans in the capital, contributed to turning them from friends into enemies, but adds that ultimately it was Isaakios II who caused them to go over to the Venetians. Choniates's account of the attack on the Muslim quarter (Μιτάτον) instigated by Flemings, Venetians, and Pisans, followed by an enormous fire, indicates that the attitudes of the Byzantine populace, which assisted in the defense of the Μιτάτον, toward the Muslim presence in Constantinople, differed significantly from that of the attacking crusaders who apparently thought that the Muslims were a legitimate target for plundering. The great fire that followed is described as unprecedented and utterly devastating.<sup>28</sup> The allegation that Alexios IV rejoiced in it is probably an invention grown out of frustration with an emperor whom Choniates held responsible for Byzantium's ruin. Familiarity with the Latin “barbarians” is another element of Alexios's defamation. Interestingly, the “noble” (εὐσχήμονες) among the Latins are said to have despised the *basileus's* unseemly behavior, as are the “prudent among the Romans” (τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐχέφρονες).<sup>29</sup>

25 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 560(1–6). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 235, n. 64 (p. 557).

26 See also the epilogue, NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 647(19–24). There, he speaks of “the love of gold characteristic for their people” (τὸ ἐθνικὸν φιλόχρυσον) which caused them to plunder the imperial tombs entirely lawlessly” (παναθεμίτως). For that reason, “those [who came] from the Western peoples” (οἱ ἐκ γενῶν τῶν ἐσπερίων) are collectively accused of “indifference” (ἀδιαφορία) and “impiousness” (ἀσέβεια). That this is generalizing hyperbole not to be interpreted literally is clear, for instance, from Choniates's praise of Emperor Baldwin's Christian morality, on which see below, pp. 385–386.

27 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 551(50)–552(76), 555(69)–556(77).

28 For this episode, see also Ch. 2, pp. 124–126.

29 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 552(77)–555(69), 557(6–24).

Choniates thus again displays a complex attitude. Despite his condemnation of the conquest of 1204 and defamation of the Latin conquerors, he recognizes qualities in them that he denies Byzantines, even if his intention was related to the admonition of fellow Byzantines.

Although Choniates criticizes the emperors Isaakios and Alexios for accommodating the crusaders in spite of their greed and the atrocities they committed, he emphasizes the dangers of attempting to depose Alexios and Isaakios, given that Alexios especially would be supported or, if deposed, avenged by the Latins. He does, however, express some approval for Alexios Doukas, nicknamed Mourtzouphlos, who is said to have demonstrated a willingness to fight the invaders, albeit to facilitate his route to power. Choniates, while urging resistance against the Latin conquerors in the years after the fall of the city, was opposed to alienating the Latins altogether. As a senior member of the government, he recognized that the situation in the capital was too chaotic for the organization of a sufficient defense.<sup>30</sup> Choniates condemns Alexios v as “foolishly” (ἀπειροκάλως) unwilling to come to terms with the Latins, even if he commends the previous resistance he embodied before becoming emperor. Despite deeming the situation hopeless, Choniates expresses esteem for Doukas’s bravery and dedication to the defense of the city while excoriating the emperor’s idle aristocratic relatives. The historian thus gives both negative and positive examples of military prowess to his contemporaries and future generations.<sup>31</sup>

A contrast is drawn between Alexios v and his cowardly troops. When Baldwin of Flanders was plundering the region of Philea, the emperor led an expedition against him. His army, however, fled when encountering Baldwin’s troops—the implicit message to fellow Byzantines being one of courageous resistance.<sup>32</sup>

Again with hindsight, Choniates remarks that evil Telchines—i.e., begrudging men or demons—prevented peace negotiations between Doge Dandolo and Doukas.<sup>33</sup> The statement that “their extreme hatred against us and our great animosity toward them did not instill any degree of humanity on either side” (τὸ γὰρ ἄκρον τῆς ἐκείνων πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀπεχθείας καὶ τὸ ὑπερβάλλον τῆς ἐπ’

30 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 559(77)–562(60). See also Hendrickx and Matzukis (1979), pp. 117, 121–124, 131, arguing that Alexios v tried to avoid open war at first; Angold (2005).

31 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 566(27–43).

32 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 567(44–55).

33 For the literary employment of the vogue term τελχίν, see Hinterberger (2013), esp. pp. 47–48, 59, 309, 435.

ἐκείνους ἡμῶν διχονοίας οὐδεμίαν ἑκατέροις παρεισήγε ῥοπὴν φιλάνθρωπον) reflects the outcome of the siege and suggests that this outcome was predetermined. The account of the meeting between doge and emperor at Kosmidion describes the terms demanded by Dandolo as extremely harsh, comparing them to “Laconian [Spartan] lashes” (Λακωνικαὶ μάστιγες) depriving the Byzantines of freedom. Choniates acknowledges, however, that for a people facing utter ruin they were endurable.<sup>34</sup>

After the failure of peace negotiations, a second Latin assault on the city walls on 12 April was successful—Choniates once more declares the vices of his fellow Byzantines, priests included, as the reason for this punishment inflicted by God. Among those who stormed the city, “Petros” appears to have made an impression on Choniates because of his enormous strength and height. The cowardly Byzantines are blamed for fearing a man who, as Choniates presents it, entered the city alone facing thousands of soldiers. The historian of course refers to the famous Peter of Bracheux, a vassal of Louis of Blois.<sup>35</sup> Alexios v receives some praise for attempting to rally soldiers and citizens, but in the grip of hopelessness the people largely ignored him. This final Latin onslaught appears in the history as God’s will against which every resistance is futile.<sup>36</sup> Choniates redoubles this impression by commenting that the city had to drink the chalice of His anger out of the Lord’s hand.<sup>37</sup> The usual atrocities of a sack were reinforced by the contemplation of Constantinople’s purported wealth, although somewhat diminished at the time, notably by the Angeloi emperors in 1203–4 and finally Alexios v.

While the descriptions in the sources overall concur that the sack was horrific, Choniates and others, e.g., Konstantinos Stilbes, tend to exaggerate the atrocities, plausibly because of their personal consternation, but also for propagandistic purposes. Byzantine reactions to the Latin conquest were not uniform and it was even welcomed by some subjects of the empire. The argument of Latin atrocities served to re-establish the authority of Constantinopolitan upper strata so they could lead the charge against the invaders, although at the court of Nicaea Choniates was unable to acquire a social status comparable to that which he had enjoyed prior to the conquest.<sup>38</sup> The fall of the city was

34 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 567(56)–568(76). On the negotiations and their motivation, see also Hendrickx and Matzukis (1979), pp. 121–124; Madden (1993), esp. pp. 456–461; Neocleous (2012a), esp. pp. 200–202.

35 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 568(77)–570(32). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 255, n. 32 (pp. 564–565), n. 35 (p. 565).

36 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 570(33)–572(83).

37 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 576(3–4).

38 Angold (2003), pp. 11–13, 116–117, 200–203; Van Tricht (2011), p. 23–25, 28–29, 332–334.

thus particularly bitter for the historian due to the permanent loss of his high office and wealth, including all his houses. Conquest and destruction shattered key markers of Choniates's identity and those of others of a similar social status. While the Constantinopolitan aspect of identity was dealt a severe blow, a focus remained on hopes to recapture the city and restore at least part of its former glory. The lamentation of beautiful ancient statues destroyed by the conquerors displays a close attachment to ancient Roman and Hellenic culture, which is so well documented in the works of Byzantine literati. Those works of art appear to have ranked as high in the historian's esteem as the literature of the ancients he had studied. Though not emulated in the manner of ancient literature, this art represented a link with the glorious past, with the times when the works that served Byzantine literati as models were composed and when the Roman Empire, their empire, had been at the height of its dominance. As evidenced by Choniates's overall ambivalent portrayal of Latins, the contempt of the soldiery, their ignorance, and lack of decency and appreciation of beauty is not to be taken as a rejection of Latins generally, but as shock at the violent assault on central features of identity. Moreover, there was a Byzantine precedent for the destruction of statues which, Choniates indicates, marked the moral decay of the polity.<sup>39</sup>

The scandalous desecration of holy houses and objects by the crusaders, following a fruitless attempt to placate them with a procession with icons, is accompanied by the designation "precursors of the Antichrist" (τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου πρόδρομοι)—it is, however, another expression of the tendency to exaggerate the atrocities.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, it alludes to the eschatological expectations that Byzantines and Latins alike associated with the conquest.<sup>41</sup> Choniates himself, however, relates that the Byzantine populace, a group which he equally expresses disdain for, also committed acts of sacrilege, for example during the riots of 1185 or 1203. It was similar during the Constantinopolitan revolt of 1200 according to Mesarites. A primary motivation was to plunder, not so much to desecrate holy places.<sup>42</sup> Choniates, however, portrays the atrocities as unique, condemning the crusaders' arrogance and boastfulness, rashness, angry disposition, cruelty, avarice, stubbornness, and clean-shaven faces.

39 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 647(1)–655(65). On this important source, see the commentary in NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, pp. 637–652; Angold (2005), p. 66; Chatterjee (2011). For identity markers in works of Byzantine literati, see esp. the first section of Ch. 1.

40 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 261, n. 51 (p. 568).

41 See below, pp. 390–391, and Ch. 1, pp. 32–33.

42 Neocleous (2019), p. 170. See also Ch. 2, pp. 116–117, 120–123, and Ch. 8, p. 241.

Byzantine sources repeatedly bring up this issue of facial hair when they describe conflicts with Latins. Otherwise, it is not of major importance in historiography, although beardedness is attested as the norm for men, and theologically minded writers in particular attached great value to it. However, Zonaras's criticism of young Byzantines who shaved off their beards shows that the norm was not necessarily as common as the sources may suggest and that criticism of Latin beardlessness may reflect that beardedness was not always that respected among fellow Byzantines.<sup>43</sup>

The condemnation of the conquerors is accompanied by implicit differentiation. Choniates's account exhibits an awareness of crusading ideals beyond the generic trend that can be observed for most discussions of Latins in middle Byzantine sources. When relating how they thought of themselves, Choniates points to high ideals that according to other sources led a significant number of crusaders to abandon the expedition once it was directed against Christians, i.e., Zara and then the Byzantines.<sup>44</sup> Choniates does not mention them because he focuses on the crusaders who took part in the capture of the Byzantine capital. He does point out, however, that ideal crusaders were supposed to be prudent and wise, love the truth, keep their oaths and hate everything evil, to be more pious, more just and exact in the observance of Christ's commandments than "we, the Greeks" (οἱ Γραικοὶ ἡμεῖς). The implication is that the behavior of the Byzantines themselves gave substance to criticism. The term *Graikoi*, used for religious differentiation as well, adopts the perspective of non-Byzantines with the intention of slighting fellow Byzantines.<sup>45</sup>

Choniates's recognition of ideals upheld by Latins as compatible with Byzantine values reinforces his condemnation of the conquerors: they had taken the cross and sworn an oath not to harm Christian lands and to spill only Saracen blood. They had also sworn not to touch any women—and Choniates reports that they violated many in the imperial city. He contrasts their professed intention to take revenge for the Holy Sepulcher with their raging against Christ. Another contrast drawn is between the mission undertaken in the name of the cross they bore on their shoulders—the material cross of a crusader—and their willingness to desecrate this same cross when sacking the city.<sup>46</sup> The history may also allude to the opinion, already widespread at the

43 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 571(74)–576(95). See also Ch. 4, p. 172, and Ch. 9, pp. 259 and 300.

44 Angold (2003), pp. 88–92.

45 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 575(67–77). Choniates chooses the same approach when he relates the reception of the envoys of the Western emperor Henry VI, on which see Ch. 12, p. 361.

46 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 575(70)–576(83). See Neocleous (2019), p. 158.

time, that the destruction of the Byzantine Empire and the establishment of Latin polities in its former territory were detrimental to the preservation of the Latin polities in Syria and Palestine.<sup>47</sup>

In a famous comparison, Choniates relates the sack of Constantinople to the Muslim occupation of Jerusalem in 1187, which he declares to have been peaceful and bloodless despite the faith of the “enemy of Christ” (χριστομάχον). “To us, however, this Christ-loving [people] which was of the same faith, they behaved quite differently, as we have said, although they had no intentional misdeed to accuse [us] of.”<sup>48</sup> Given the introspective tendency of middle Byzantine literature,<sup>49</sup> the capture of Jerusalem might not have been mentioned at all in Choniates’s history without this comparison.

What is crucial here is that this behavior was not to be expected from the Latin West. Lamenting and summarizing the fate of his city, Choniates, in biblical language, submits that if the Byzantine capital had not given birth to most of the “obscure and scattered tribes,” it nourished them and lifted them up—a statement addressing the support Romania had given even to undistinguished Westerners, notably under Manouel and Maria-Xene, but also under other rulers. In his description of Venetian friends and acquaintances after the fall of the city, as well as Pisans and Amalfitans preceding it, Choniates indicates close and friendly relations that contrast with the outcome of the Fourth Crusade, suggesting that the conquest was anything but the necessary consequence of Byzantine-Western relations in the twelfth century.<sup>50</sup>

The *Historia* then displays the pain of exiled Constantinopolitans separated from their city, employs biblical quotations, and expresses ideas of future recovery and restoration.<sup>51</sup> This is in line with concepts of imperial restoration and the return of God’s people to the capital, which Choniates himself laid out in his orations for the imperial court of Nicaea, which, however, did not place the same value on oratory or the virtue of noble birth (*eugeneia*) as the old empire and disappointed Choniates’s hopes of recovering his lost wealth and status.<sup>52</sup> Quoting from the book of Job, the history returns to “our sins, the injustices of our fathers” (ἀμαρτίαι ἡμῶν, ἀδικίαι πατέρων ἡμῶν). God is asked

47 Neocleous (2019), pp. 219–221.

48 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 576(84–95); see p. 576(94–95): “ἡμῖν δ’ ἐκείνως τὸ φιλόχριστον καὶ ὁμόδοξον προσενήνεκται, ὡς ἐπιτρέχοντες εἴπομεν, μηδὲν ἐπεγκαλεῖν ἀδικημα ἔχοντες.”

49 See above, n. 1.

50 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 577(19–27). See Van Tricht (2011), pp. 25–26.

51 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 577(28)–579(69).

52 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orationes*, nos. 13, 14, 16, 17; Angelov (2007), pp. 39–40, 98–101, 105–106, 124, 128.

to direct his anger against those who do not know him and against “the tribes who have not invoked your name” (γενεαὶ αἱ τὸ ὄνομά σου οὐκ ἐπεκαλέσαντο), suggesting that it was the turn of the Latins to except divine punishment.<sup>53</sup>

Choniates arrives at a point where he appears to have intended to bring his account to a close, arguing that the noble tradition of Hellenic historiography should not be used to describe endless barbarian victories.<sup>54</sup> He suggests that once the period of “lawlessness,” i.e., the subversion of Byzantine imperial order, is over and God is willing to assist his servants, historiography may be taken up again. Moreover, he asserts: God has not forsaken us, His people, forever, and the Latins will suffer, for God has only employed them as a tool of destruction, a scourge, and executioners. The Latin occupation is compared to an illness that will come to an end by death or recovery and might be only a temporary castigation. Choniates, having related countless Latin sins and atrocities, presents as a matter of course that the castigators of the Byzantines will be castigated themselves. The godless will be condemned to eternal damnation and cast out, but whoever places his hope in the Lord will be consoled in his misfortunes and lifted up again.<sup>55</sup>

The continuation of the history once more reflects on the sins and foolishness of the Byzantines and especially the Constantinopolitans, causing divine retribution. The reason for continuing the narrative is the defeat at Adrianople in April 1205, a major setback for the Latin conquerors.<sup>56</sup>

This continuation of the narrative contributes to the mitigation of the condemnation and denigration of the Latin conquerors. The Vlacho-Bulgarians who defeated them are declared even more barbarous than the Latins, a statement that, among other things, might refer to the treatment of the captured Latin emperor Baldwin. The situation, meanwhile, for the Byzantines in the conquered capital is deemed grievous: insulted, abused, and robbed of their possessions and loved ones, they had no basis for a continued existence in the city, and thus the Latin leaders allowed them to leave. If Choniates paints a bleak picture of the bulk of the Latin soldiery, referring to them as base and

53 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 579(70–81).

54 See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 614(7–10 b), a continuation that breaks off before the defeat at Adrianople; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a), p. 188.

55 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 579(82)–582(46). See also the similar passage on pp. 591(21)–592(49). On the representation of the Byzantines as God’s Chosen People, see Ch. 1, p. 26; also Angelov (2007), pp. 98–101, for the role it played within the ideology of restoration of Byzantine rule in Constantinople propagated in the Nicaean polity.

56 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 583(1)–587(95).



mean, “robbers” (λησται) and “castigators” (κολασται), he exempts their leaders, who at least allowed his fellow Byzantines to leave.<sup>57</sup>

Choniates turns to his own fate, the narration of which gives more indications of ambivalent attitudes toward Latins. The historian’s sumptuous residence having been destroyed by fire in the previous year, many Byzantines gathered in his house located near Hagia Sophia, though nowhere were they safe from looters. Choniates and his family escaped with the help of a Venetian merchant named Dominikos, the family’s friend and cohabitant, but other Venetian acquaintances assisted as well. The story of Dominikos is an aspect of the *Historia* that evidences that, for Choniates, “the Latins” as a homogeneous block did not exist, that he used generalizing topoi in a literary manner and that he expected an attentive, educated audience to understand them in context.<sup>58</sup>

Choniates’s account of his departure from Constantinople contains more nuances and indications of proximity with Latins. When finally constrained to leave the city, Choniates and his family, abandoned by their servants, had to endure more greed, not only for the possessions they and other departing Byzantines were suspected of hiding in their clothing, but also for their women. The group with which Choniates was leaving the city did their best to protect them, but a crusader, compared to a wolf, succeeded in abducting a young girl. Choniates managed to influence some Latins, who spoke a little Greek, to help. Although the history minimizes this, stating that this help was granted reluctantly, it is another indication that the conquerors were not all wholly bad. When they located the culprit, Choniates reminded the Latins of their law, the oaths they had sworn and the orders of their leaders, which did not allow them to lay violent hands on women. He appealed to their pity, family feelings, and Christian faith.<sup>59</sup> The culprit refrained from his evil act, Choniates maintains, because the sincere words of his fellows came “not just from their lips, but also from the heart” (οὐκ ἀπὸ χειλέων μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ καρδίας).<sup>60</sup>

57 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 585(46)–587(95). There is also a wordplay with δικασται, λησται, and κολασται: see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 289, n. 12 (p. 576).

58 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 587(1)–588(370). See also Ch. 2, pp. 99–100.

59 On these orders and the importance of the Christian status of the Byzantines from the perspective of the conquerors, see Neocleous (2019), p. 158.

60 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 588(32)–591(11). This occurrence is corroborated by his brother MICHAEL CHONIATES, *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 360–364, who, however, omits the Western assistance. See also Angold (2017), p. 346. On the issue of communication with speakers of Western languages, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 297, n. 38 (pp. 579–580).

Once more lamenting the fate of his city, the historian expresses gratitude that he and his family were spared captivity and the torture that “our people,” i.e., of his social status and wealth, had to endure because their captors were eager for possible hidden riches. Having recounted the arrival of his impoverished family in Selymbria, Choniates berates the Latins in Constantinople for displaying the arrogance and insolence of conquerors showing no respect for Byzantine customs and institutions, be it the imperial purple, literary culture, or the senate—reflective of the aristocratic social stratum in which he had moved. He also deplores sexual debauchery, gluttony, the continued desecration of everything holy, and unclean, disgusting eating habits. He is quick to denounce their ideas of grandiose conquests, prematurely divided up among their leaders. Such haughtiness and sinful deeds would be punished as they had been with the Byzantines.<sup>61</sup>

The censure of Latin vices, mirroring Byzantine vices, is thus always to be read as an admonition of and warning for fellow Byzantines.

## 2 Instrument and Victims of Divine Retribution, a Model against Which to Be Measured

### 2.1 *The First Year after the Fall of the City until the Turning Point of Adrianople*

The focus of Choniates's previous narrative was on anonymous collectives and individuals among the Latins, the characterization of Dandolo being an exception. As instruments of God's wrath, individuals had no relevance—now, however, they are prominently defined in the service of the *Historia's* criticism of emperors and fellow Byzantines.

An important task for the Latins in Constantinople was to anoint a new emperor. In this, they followed the Byzantine concept of associating imperial rule with control of the imperial city. Whoever ruled there was the legitimate emperor. Choniates indicates this when he uses the word *basileus* for the man the Latins proceeded to choose. Before 1204, it had been out of the question for the Byzantine government to recognize a non-Byzantine ruler as legitimate Roman emperor, even Western emperors were usually referred to as  $\rho\eta\xi$ . Still, Choniates continued to maintain Byzantine superiority: the Latin *basileus* was not the full equivalent of his Byzantine predecessors. Rulers of the Byzantine

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61 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 593(50)–595(32). On the social tensions that seem apparent in this passage and are regarded as an important factor in the success of the capture of 1204, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 303, n. 56 (pp. 582–583).

polities in exile began to lay claim to the imperial title and leadership in efforts to recapture Constantinople.<sup>62</sup>

The history claims that the leaders of the Latins at first favored a divine judgment involving four chalices, identified as their ancestral custom. This ritual does not feature in any other source and may have arisen from a provision that, in the event of an equal number of votes, the lot would decide.<sup>63</sup>

In any case, Choniates implies that the Latins were foolish and their rule in Constantinople was illegitimate. Eventually, Dandolo's suggestion of an electoral committee was adopted. This committee is said to have consisted of five Lombards and Flemings (Φραγγίσκοι), of the highest rank, as well as an equal number of Venetians—other sources establish twelve electors, but this plausibly did not matter to Choniates, given the approach he displays.<sup>64</sup> The choice fell upon Count Baldwin of Flanders. The doge's motive was to have a man elected who would allow the Venetians to maintain high influence. Choniates adds that his blindness prevented Dandolo from becoming emperor himself. The Byzantine concept of physical integrity for the imperial office is applied to the new Latin masters of Constantinople in this instance. He does, however, contrast Dandolo's blindness with his keen intellect. Given the power the doge exercised over the crusading expedition, not least due to the financial obligations to the Venetians, he is portrayed by Choniates as the mastermind behind the entire enterprise.<sup>65</sup>

Emperor Baldwin's portrayal contrasts with the debauchery and sinfulness of Byzantine rulers described by Choniates, and with the behavior of the Latin soldiery in Romania:<sup>66</sup>

62 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 596(33–34). See Van Tricht (2011), pp. 357–358. The Latin Empire never adopted an ecumenical outlook in the manner of Byzantium, even if some indications of ecumenism are present in the source material, see *ibid.*, esp. chs. 2, 3, 7, 8; Angold (2013); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 307, n. 67 (pp. 585–586).

63 See Carile's assessment in *PARTITIO TERRARUM IMPERII ROMANIE*, pp. 127, 138.

64 See the introduction to this chapter, pp. 370–371.

65 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 596(34)–597(78). On Baldwin's election, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 309, nn. 72–75 (p. 588); Carile (1978), pp. 175–186; Lock (1995), pp. 43–44; Van Tricht (2011), pp. 46–47. Choniates, moreover, remarks that Baldwin, at the age of not yet thirty-two looked up to the cunning Dandolo as a father. He was also less of a danger for the Venetians than was Boniface of Montferrat because his homeland in Gaul lay as far from Venice as did Romania, and Baldwin's lack of Italian connections worked in his favor.

66 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 311, n. 79 (p. 589), for the observation that his portrayal resembles somewhat that of Frederick Barbarossa (see the first section of Ch. 12 and section 7 of Ch. 15). For the happiness of Baldwin's marriage, corroborated by other sources, see *ibid.*, p. 313, n. 80 (p. 589).

This man was, as they said, a God-fearing man and self-disciplined in the way he lived, and he did not touch a woman, not even with his gaze, while he was separated from his wife, but he was unwavering in praising God and in every situation of need. The greatest thing, however, is that he had it proclaimed twice a week in the evening that no one within the palace who approached a woman was to put her to bed unless she was his lawful wife.<sup>67</sup>

However, in his usual concern for a balanced portrayal of characters, Byzantine or non-Byzantine, Choniates charges Baldwin with the same haughtiness and false confidence as other Latins and Byzantines by quoting a proverb attributed to Archimedes.<sup>68</sup>

The a-version of the *Historia* adopts an indignant tone when recounting Baldwin's dismissal of Byzantine generals and officials, a measure that aimed at rewarding Baldwin's Latin followers and exerting better control. The emperor's subordinates did likewise. The Latins did not tolerate any other people (*ethnos*) that would best them in the art of war, Choniates comments. For that reason, he maintains, beauty and education (literally "Graces and Muses") did not matter to them, which made them wild "by nature" (τὴν φύσιν) and inclined them to prefer anger to reason. Choniates's remarks indicate that he was rejected for a position in the hierarchy of the Latin Empire. He had to provide for his family, and it is plausible that he wished to return to his cherished home city, despite its considerable destruction. His comments, at any rate, point to a crucial difficulty of the new Latin government: it lacked support from Byzantine upper social strata, both civil and military, and it did not do enough to gain it. This assessment, however, applies less to the rule of Henry of Flanders (1205–16),<sup>69</sup> despite retaliatory measures against Byzantine rebels at the beginning of his reign.<sup>70</sup>

67 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 597(72–78): "Ἦν δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτος εὐλαβὴς τὰ πρὸς θεόν, ὡς ἐλέγετο, καὶ τὴν δίκαιαν ἐγκρατῆς, γυναικὶ δὲ μηδὲ μέγρι βλέμματος προσεσηκῶς ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον τῆς οἰκειᾶς γαμετῆς ἀπεφοίτησεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ <πρὸς> τὸν εἰς θεὸν ὑμνητήριον καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀνάγκην ἀρέμβαστος. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, δις εἶχεν ἐκάστης ἐβδομάδος τὸν ἑσπέρας ἐπεμβόωντα μηδὲνα τῶν ἀρχαίων ἐντὸς κατευνάζεσθαι μὴ νομίμῳ γυναικὶ πλησιάζοντα."

68 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 597(81 app.); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 313, n. 82 (p. 589).

69 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 597(79)–598(92). See Angold (2003), ch. 6; Jacoby (2008), esp. pp. 59–67; Van Tricht (2011), pp. 28–39, ch. 5; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. n. 84 (p. 590). Lock (1995), p. 284, observes by contrast that it was a stabilizing factor of Latin rule in Greece to leave Byzantine landholders in place. See also Gasparis (2015).

70 See below, pp. 396–397.

Having made gains in Thrace, Baldwin was ambushed in Xantheia; Choniates mocks the quick retreat of the Byzantine assaulters. This incident is followed by a quick summary of the rivalry between Baldwin and Boniface of Montferrat over the empire's second city, Thessalonike. When Baldwin showed no intention of conceding Thessalonike, Boniface was outraged, abusing the emperor as "more deceptive than Greeks" (Γραϊκῶν ἀπατηλότερος)—another implied insult to fellow Byzantines.<sup>71</sup> Boniface rebelled, attempting to make common cause with the native population against Baldwin. The emperor, however, was warmly received by the inhabitants of Thessalonike, who thought it their best chance to escape the horrors of a sack and have their rights confirmed. They did, however, request that Baldwin's army not enter the city as it was difficult to control, consisting of various peoples other than Flemings, each led by its own commander. The emperor, granting their request, then issued a traditional Byzantine imperial document in red ink confirming the customs and rights of the Thessalonians. This served to establish a certain legitimacy.<sup>72</sup>

Choniates's criticism of Baldwin's haughtiness reflects bitterness over the Latin conquest, and the emperor's refusal to employ him or his social peers. At the same time, the Latins sought an understanding with certain sections of the Byzantine population and were able to persuade them of the considerable advantages of cooperation. It was in the same spirit of avoidance of creating unnecessary enemies that Baldwin guaranteed that Boniface would suffer no harm. Boniface accepted this offer from the emperor's marshal (μαρισκάλδος) Ἰοφρέ (the historiographer Geoffrey of Villehardouin),<sup>73</sup> restored Didymoteichon to Baldwin, and received the city of Thessalonike in exchange. While other sources relate this occurrence in greater detail, Choniates's focus is on Boniface's misdeeds against the Thessalonians, which are deemed similar to those perpetrated against the Constantinopolitans, though on a smaller scale, and also portrayed as divine retribution.<sup>74</sup>

Unlike Baldwin, Boniface is characterized as a hostile conqueror punishing the Byzantines, who are again disparaged for pathetic resistance, but

71 On Choniates's purposeful employment of *Graikoi*, a term that can be regarded as the most direct translation of the Latin *Graeci* or its equivalent in Western medieval vernacular languages, see above, p. 380, and Ch. 12, pp. 355–356, 361.

72 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 598(93)–600(44). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 317, n. 100 (p. 592); Lock (1995), pp. 44–45; Angold (2003), pp. 147–148; Van Tricht (2011), pp. 106, 123, 140, 211–212.

73 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 600(47–48), explaining that the Greek language designates the office of μαρισκάλδος as *prōtostratōr*. This is one of the rare instances in a Byzantine history of this period where a Latin term is brought up and discussed.

74 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 600(45–51). See Van Tricht (2011), pp. 47–52, 211–212.

the portrayal may also be influenced by disappointed hopes that he would side with them against the Latin Empire.<sup>75</sup> After entering Thessalonike, the marquess “hid his sinister and deceitful character” (τὸ τοῦ τρόπου σκαιῶδες τε καὶ στρεβλόχειλον ἐπικρυψάμενος). Disrespecting Baldwin’s provisions, he descended upon the fortunes of the Thessalonians “similar to the cat exposed by the fat falling down to the ground close by” (τῆ δὲ γαλῆ παρομοιωθεὶς, ἣν διήλεγε τὸ στέαρ παρεισπεσόν), a proverb previously applied to the inclinations of the infamous Andronikos Komnenos.<sup>76</sup> After having robbed the Thessalonians of large quantities of money and their loveliest houses, which he gave to his knights, the marquess set out for further conquests in Hellas and the Peloponnese, “greatly desiring to advance because of the simplemindedness of the Romans” (προβαίνειν ἐρῶν διὰ τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀφέλειαν)—another barb aimed at Choniates’s Byzantine audience. Among Boniface’s followers were Byzantine aristocrats, who, supporting his stepson Manouel Angelos’s claim to the imperial throne, attracted the historian’s criticism as men who had become “panders of the land of their fathers” (τῆς πατρίδος προαγωγοί).<sup>77</sup> The marquess acquired many towns and cities without effort, and these conquests were more numerous than his soldiers, Choniates hyperbolically affirms.<sup>78</sup>

The narrative, once more indicating heterogeneous attitudes toward the conquerors, resumes with the campaign in Asia Minor of Ἐρρῆς (Emperor Baldwin’s brother Henry) and “Petros who hailed from Pratz[e] [Peter of Bracheux], a man with the strength of a hero” (Πέτρος ὁ ἐκ Πράτζης ὀρμώμενος, ἀνὴρ ἠρωϊκὸς τὴν ἰσχύν).<sup>79</sup> Baldwin, unwilling to remain idle, sent them to

75 Carile (1978), pp. 195–196; Haberstumpf (2009), pp. 27–31; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 315, n. 97 (p. 592). Choniates points to cases of substantial difficulties for Latin conquerors and native populations to coexist, necessitating the retreat of the former from the countryside to safer, fortified places such as Thessalonike. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 319, n. 104 (p. 593).

76 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 140(82)–141(87). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 317, n. 103 (pp. 592–593).

77 Hendrickx (2001); see also Ch. 3, p. 148. On Boniface’s marriage to the Byzantine Empress Dowager Maria, the Latin Empire’s marriage strategies more generally and attempts to come to a rapprochement with Byzantine aristocratic families, see Angold (2011); Van Tricht (2011), pp. 411–412. For the background of Choniates’s criticism of the lack of resistance against the spread of Latin rule, see below, pp. 391–392.

78 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 600(51)–601(83). The condemnation of Boniface also figures in the LO-version, where, with artful rhetoric, his death is celebrated as a fortunate event for the Byzantines and Thessalonike in particular (p. 636[55–59 LO]). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 389, n. 294 (p. 625).

79 The remark about Peter’s heroic strength is an addition of the a-version. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 601(84–86 L). Niketas may have decided to emphasize Latin superiority more strongly to give the impression that the Byzantines were destined to suffer

make further gains for the Latin Empire. Henry made common cause with the Armenians of Troia to capture and plunder cities.<sup>80</sup> Despite leading numerous troops against Peter, Theodoros Laskaris suffered a defeat. Thereafter, Peter was received peacefully by the inhabitants of Lopadion as well as other places. They carried crosses and the bible with them to appeal to the Christian denomination they shared. Choniates suggests again that some Byzantines were inclined toward an arrangement with the Latins and condemns their unwillingness to fight Peter's troops: "[They were unwilling to fight in spite of the fact that] it is a painful thing to serve a Latin, a tongue that does not go with Hellenes, avarice, an ignorant eye, an insatiable belly, an irascible and inexorable personality and a hand which is always searching for the sword" (πονηρὸν ἐς θεραπείαν χρῆμα Λατίνος, φωνὴ ἀσύμφωνος Ἑλλήσι, γνώμη φιλοχρήματος, ὀφθαλμὸς ἀπαιδαγώγητος, γαστήρ ἀκόρεστος, ὀργίλος καὶ δριμεία ψυχὴ, καὶ χεὶρ διφῶσα τὸ ξίφος διὰ παντός).<sup>81</sup>

Although seemingly commending the successful defense of Prousa and subsequent uprisings, Choniates seizes the offensive of Theodoros Mankaphas against Henry as another opportunity to taunt fellow Byzantines. They carelessly renounced their advantage, Choniates maintains, being too dull to initiate an attack. The Latins, led by Henry, took the offensive. Their cavalry dispersed the enemy, pursuing and killing the Byzantine infantry abandoned by the riders. When Choniates changes the geographic focus to central and southern Greece and Boniface's advances there, the theme remains the same. Leon Sgouros, a local ruler who had become autonomous during the last years of Alexios III, tried to ambush Boniface, reconsidered at the mere sight of the Latin knights and absconded to Acrocorinth (the fortress of Corinth).<sup>82</sup>

Sgouros, deemed a bloody, violent, and predatory ruler, appears as one of the worst sinners who provoked God's retribution in the form of conquest and is arguably represented as worse than the conquerors themselves. Choniates's elder brother Michael, metropolitan of Athens, who apparently influenced Sgouros's characterization, is presented as venerable in contrast to the villain and praised for opposing him. Interestingly, Frankish sources give Sgouros

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still more. By contrast with the earlier LO-version, he no longer hoped to be awarded an important position at the court of the Laskarids.

80 On the background of this collaboration, see Dédéyan (2009).

81 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 601(84)–602(7). See Van Tricht (2011), p. 276; Neocleous (2019), pp. 204–205.

82 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 602(8)–605(64). For the account of the occurrences in central Greece, Michael Choniates, Niketas's brother, was probably an important source. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 325, n. 125 (p. 596).

more credit for his resistance, but Choniates avoids giving him any, even though he otherwise insists on the importance of Byzantine resistance against the conquerors.<sup>83</sup>

Choniates then addresses the fate of Alexios v Doukas, the last emperor before the fall of the city. Having been tricked and blinded by his father-in-law, Alexios (III), he fell into Latin hands. Doukas was tried for the deposition and murder of his predecessor, Alexios (IV) Angelos, and, judged guilty, was condemned to “an unusual and most violent death” (θάνατος καινότροπός τε και βιαιότατος):<sup>84</sup> he was thrown from a pillar in the Forum of Theodosios, ending his life in “a most miserable fashion” (οικτρότατα). The Latins, wishing to make an example of Alexios, showed no interest in his defense, as Choniates points out. Different concepts of treason and loyalty between Byzantium and the West, which did play a role in the trial and execution, are not addressed. Given his attitude toward Alexios, Choniates’s lack of sympathy is to be expected.<sup>85</sup>

Prophetic expectations also played a role in the execution. According to András Kraft’s recent investigation, the crusaders shared Byzantine eschatological beliefs associated with Constantinople and attempted to invert those that were unfavorable to them. The forum as well as its columns of Theodosios and Arkadios and their engraved depictions were associated with apocalyptic concepts and the capture of Constantinople. According to Kraft, a motive of the Latins was to falsify Byzantine beliefs in the emergence of a savior-emperor at the forum by executing Alexios Doukas in this manner. At the same time, the execution likely served to cast doubt on other Byzantine prophetic narratives, to invert prophetic expectations, to claim divine sanction for the Latin conquest, and to strengthen the legitimacy of Latin rule. By convicting and executing Alexios Angelos’s murderer, Baldwin probably also hoped to be recognized

83 Lock (1995), pp. 69–72; Van Tricht (2011), p. 333. Choniates expresses great pride in his kinship with Michael, whose eulogizing portrayal may be meant to reflect on the historian himself, although or more precisely because he professes modesty by emphasizing his inferiority with respect to *aretē* (virtue) and *logos* (eloquence and other positive attributes).

84 The manner of execution was not wholly unprecedented because Emperor Andronikos was publicly executed at a column, a fate that he had falsely predicted for his cousin and predecessor Manouel according to Choniates. See Kraft (2021), pp. 95–96.

85 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 605(65)–609(72). As Choniates’s portrayal of Doukas is predominantly critical—he was demoted by him—it is likely that *οικτρός* was meant in its contemptuous sense of “miserable” in this instance. Throwing a former emperor off a column was bound to be effectful, also considering that statues of emperors standing on columns still existed in Constantinople at the time. See Hendrickx and Matzakis (1979), pp. 130–131; Van Tricht (2011), p. 138; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 333, n. 154 (pp. 600–601); Grünbart (2016b).



by more Byzantines as legitimate successor to the last emperor whom at least the Latins officially regarded as legitimate. While other Byzantines reacted by developing apocalyptic counter-narratives, Choniates's (and Akropolites's) silence on the prophetic context of the execution may indicate a refusal to give credit to the Latin narratives.<sup>86</sup>

Leon Sgouros attempted to halt Boniface's advance into Hellas by preparing for an ambush at a variety of locations: he was defeated for reasons explained with yet more reproaches. To this Choniates adds the scathing comment that the inhabitants of Thebes welcomed Boniface more warmly than a loved one returning home after a long absence, and this in spite of his small army, described as ineffectual and uncoordinated because of the various origins of its soldiers, who were not used to serving together. Nevertheless, he adds, those lands were easy prey for the marquess, because their inhabitants, mean and cowardly and prone to choose the stronger side, willingly submitted to him.<sup>87</sup> Euboea is equally subjected to Choniates's censure: Boniface's troops occupied the citadel easily because of the inconstancy of the Euboeans—a characteristic often ascribed to "barbarians," Latins included. Literati, with their focus on Constantinople, occasionally associate provincials with barbarism in any case.<sup>88</sup>

The rapidity of these conquests suggests local interests and a lack of attachment to the fallen government. This lack of attachment drew censure from Choniates, but also from his brother Michael and others. Choniates, however, exempts his brother from criticism when recounting the surrender of Athens, which had previously resisted Sgouros. While he refrains from commenting on Michael's stated justification of the surrender—the avoidance of unnecessary bloodshed after the horrors of the sack of the capital—he does not praise him in this instance. Indeed, Michael Choniates's own correspondence, for all its condemnation of the conquerors, displays a pragmatic attitude toward Latin rule and the need for strategies of self-preservation. He considers that the rule of Leon Sgouros would be worse than that of the Latins. The upper social strata of the former empire often engaged in propagandistic attacks against the Latins and those who sought arrangements with them, ignoring or neglecting arguments in favor of collaboration and more complicated realities. Such

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86 Kraft (2021).

87 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 609(73–81).

88 However, as discussed in Ch. 1, p. 32, that does not mean that a provincial origin was necessarily associated with negative characteristics—many literati themselves hailed from the provinces. Rather, it can be taken as an affirmation of status, since Constantinople was regarded as Romania's leading city in virtually every respect.

a reality was that even the ruler of Nicaea had recruited Latin mercenaries, as had previous Byzantine emperors. The *Historia* cannot therefore be interpreted as an indication of unanimous Byzantine hostility against Latins after 1204.<sup>89</sup> Choniates then intensifies his criticism of fellow Byzantines and makes the opposition between provincial or local attitudes and those of the former Constantinopolitan upper social strata even more explicit.<sup>90</sup>

In a hyperbolic passage that interrupts his account of Boniface's advance, Choniates re-emphasizes the rapidity and scale of the Latin conquests, while reminding his audience of the volatility of all human success, likely an allusion to the battle of Adrianople, a disastrous Latin defeat that also halted the marquess's conquests. Sgouros, who is once more reviled and compared to a cowardly snake, having retreated to the heavily fortified citadel of Corinth, forced Boniface to resort to a lengthy siege, as was the case with Nauplion. Choniates declares that all eastern and western lands of the Byzantine Empire would have been conquered by Latins if God had not intervened (i.e., at Adrianople).<sup>91</sup>

Members of great Byzantine families who had fled with Alexios (111) and were rejected by Boniface and Baldwin<sup>92</sup> offered their services to the ruler of Bulgaria, "Ioannes" (Kaloyan). He accepted them for a reason that is in line with the previous characterization of the Latins: Kaloyan gazed at their wild nature with worry and feared their lances like a sword of fire. The Byzantine aristocrats are said to have made their offer despite Kaloyan's previous evil deeds against them. Choniates accuses him of smashing and sacking almost the entire western dominion of the Byzantines with his "Scythian" (Cuman) droves, causing manifold ills and turning it into a desert. Thus occurs the miraculous reversal of the fortunes of the Byzantines: one of their worst enemies was led by divine providence to accept their services, as had Boniface and Baldwin been induced to reject them, so that enemies would defeat enemies. The Latins had rejected Kaloyan's peace offers, referring to him as their servant (ὕπηρέτης).<sup>93</sup> The implication is that the Latins caused their own ruin just like

89 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 609(81)–610(95). See Lock (1995), pp. 50–51, 68–72; Angold (2003), pp. 136–142; (2017), pp. 344–345; Jacoby (2008); Shawcross (2011), pp. 17–33; Van Tricht (2011), pp. 332–334.

90 See below, pp. 398–399, 400–401, 401–404.

91 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 610(1)–612(41).

92 For the Latin Empire's failure to win the allegiance of upper Byzantines social strata and its corresponding difficulties to establish a firm power base, reflected in the criticism of Emperor Baldwin, see above, p. 386.

93 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 612(41)–613(63).

Isaakios II Angelos had brought great misfortune upon Romania by similarly offending Petros and Asen two decades earlier.<sup>94</sup>

There follows the presentation of a chain of events favoring the demoralized Byzantines and castigating the Latins for the same vicious arrogance displayed by fellow Byzantines throughout the history. Kaloyan successfully entrusted his Byzantine allies to instigate uprisings against Latin rule in Thrace and Macedonia. This relieved Asia Minor somewhat because it constrained Latin troops to return to the west. It is said to have mitigated the overbold temper of those who had conquered Hellas and the Peloponnese and caused them to think more moderately of themselves.<sup>95</sup> The *Historia* has the Latins refer to Kaloyan as a rebel against the Byzantines, which may be an allusion to the feudal concept of a vassal rebelling against his rightful lord. Baldwin may have adopted such a viewpoint to lay claim to Bulgaria as legitimate successor of the Byzantine emperors.<sup>96</sup>

Choniates's account of an event at Arkadioupolis indicates more divine retribution in store for the Byzantines and remarkable appreciation of Latin virtues. Having taken up quarters in the city, the Latins were attacked by those who had pretended to abandon it. The Latins reacted cautiously. While barbarians and Latins are often accused of foolhardiness in Byzantine literary sources, this episode contradicts that topos. In this instance they are prudent, disciplined, and manly, everything the Byzantines ought to be according to Choniates:

At dawn, when they noticed that the Romans made no use of a battle array or strategic methods, but that they were not even properly armed, they took the decision to lead out their force, drawn up in order of battle, as if to war. When the Romans confronted them with courage, however, and approached the walls (they mistook, namely, the caution of the Latins for cowardice), they poured out of the gates and met them in battle, and, resisting for a brief time, the Romans turned to flight. And on that day a pitiable and lamentable spectacle occurred: they [the Latins]

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94 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 369(58–73). On collaboration between Kaloyan and Byzantine aristocrats against the Latins and the previous Latin rejection of Kaloyan's offer of alliance, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 341, n. 176 (p. 607); Lock (1995), pp. 52–53; Van Tricht (2011), pp. 388–389.

95 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 613(64–76).

96 For Bulgarian-Latin relations at the time, see Van Tricht (2011), pp. 387–396, esp. pp. 387–391.

spared no one, they used the sword against everyone, soaked the soil in blood and none of the fallen received funeral rites.<sup>97</sup>

Only the cruelty and refusal of burial identify the Latins as villains. The subsequent siege of Adrianople before the decisive battle marked a reversal of fortunes, however. The Byzantines took appropriate countermeasures against the efforts of the Latin army—a stark contrast with Choniates's description of the defense of Constantinople.<sup>98</sup>

Subsequently, the Latins lacked the caution they had displayed at Arkadioupolis. Kaloyan's "Scythian" (Cuman) riders lured them into a trap, with the Latin knights pursuing them in vain because their horses were slower. The Cumans surrounded and overwhelmed their enemies, who were exhausted by the pursuit, pulled them down from their horses and cut the stiff-necked (*σκληροτραχίλοι*)—another pointer to the punishment in store for the arrogant. As for the Latin commanders, Baldwin was captured, Louis of Blois fell, and Dandolo retreated; the strongest troops of the Latin army had been annihilated. By stating that the defeat at Adrianople happened exactly one year after the capture of Constantinople, Choniates underlines the significance of the Latin defeat. His comment about Dandolo's escape also suggests gratification at this reversal: "[The doge fled to Constantinople] with the tissue of his intestines burst by the many parasanges which he rode fleeing and his scrotum was strikingly swollen."<sup>99</sup>

The history is quick to point out that while the Latins had suffered a major setback, it was not the end of Byzantine suffering. The Bulgarian victory was also a great risk to Byzantines, including Choniates and his family in Selymbria. Kaloyan allowed his troops to sack the towns and cities in the vicinity of Constantinople which had been subdued by the Latin Empire. The Latins in turn were eager to take revenge against those who had plotted against them.

97 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 613(77)–614(7); see p. 614(93–7): “ὑποφασάσης δὲ τῆς ἕω Ῥωμαίου κατασκευάμενοι μῆτε παρατάξει, μῆτε μὴν μεθόδοις χρωμένους στρατηγικαῖς, ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ἐς ἀκρίβειαν ὠπλισμένους, ξυντεταγμένην τὴν δύναμιν ὡς ἐς μάχην ἐξάγειν ἐγνώκεσαν. ὡς δ’ ἀπήντων αὐτοῖς Ῥωμαῖοι μετὰ θάρσους τοῖς τεῖχεσιν ἐπεγχερίπτοντες (ῶντο γὰρ δειλίαν τὴν τῶν Λατίνων ἀσφάλειαν), διεκχέονται τῶν πυλῶν καὶ σφισι συμπλέκονται, καὶ πρὸς μικρὸν ἀντισχόντες Ῥωμαῖοι τρέπονται. καὶ γίνεται τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἐλσεινὸν καὶ οἰκτιστὸν θέαμα· μηδενὸς γὰρ λαβόντες φειδώ, κατὰ δὲ πάντων τῷ ξίφει χρῆσάμενοι τὴν γῆν ἐπίαναν αἵμασι καὶ τῶν πεσόντων οὐδεὶς ὅσας τετύχηκε.”

98 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 614(7)–615(22).

99 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 615(23)–617(76); see p. 617(74–76): “διερρηγμένος τὸν στήμονα τῶν ἐντέρων τοῖς πολλοῖς παρασάγγαις, οὓς ἐν τῷ φεύγειν δίππευσε, καὶ διωδηκῶς ἐπὶ μέγα τὸν κυλινδροφύλακα θύλακον.”

The Byzantines had to endure an unprecedented castigation, being assaulted from both sides. Those who sought to escape by ship were pursued even at sea (presumably by Venetians).<sup>100</sup>

Against the Bulgarians, Latin military prowess, a virtue that Greek sources esteem, is once more deemed worthy of emulation because the Byzantines no longer lived up to this prowess by the time of the Angeloi according to the *Historia*. Kaloyan's advance toward Thessalonike had to counter continued resistance. A bloody battle ensued at Serrai, with the Latins measuring up to their reputation. The Latins met Kaloyan full of aggressiveness in their customary careful battle array, and inflicted heavy losses. Nevertheless, Kaloyan's troops were victorious and pursued the fleeing Latins, enclosing the citadel so completely that they constrained the garrison to surrender. The defenders were thus unable to send a message to Boniface for assistance. The marquis's rule in Thessalonike was equally threatened by a revolt, with his wife Maria besieged in the citadel. This rebellion, however, was defeated without his intervention. Boniface, pleased with this news, celebrated, showing off in front of his confidants. The marquis intended to march against Kaloyan, but he received the news of Baldwin's capture and Louis of Blois's death, which caused him to retreat to Thessalonike. Again, the introspective narrative suggests that human fortunes change very quickly but that these changes neither increase human wisdom nor diminish human vanity.<sup>101</sup>

More Byzantine suffering was the consequence of the return of the marquis, who, however, was subsequently punished as well. Taking revenge for the uprising during his absence, he imposed fines so high that some were forced to leave the city, others were slaughtered or hanged, especially commoners and ecclesiastics. The fate of the former emperor Alexios III and his wife is deemed humiliating and unheard of.<sup>102</sup> Boniface's army sent to relieve Serrai, however, was defeated and Thessalonike enclosed. As a result, the marquis's recent conquests were assumed by Kaloyan.<sup>103</sup>

100 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 617(77)–618(13).

101 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 618(14)–620(61). On this rebellion, known only through Choniates, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 255, nn. 206, 209 (pp. 610–611).

102 For the description of Alexios III's and Euphrosyne's fate, see Ch. 12, pp. 363–364.

103 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 620(61)–621(87). With Baldwin's capture, the men who remained to lead the Latins in Constantinople were his brother Henry and the new head of the Venetians, Marino Zen—Dandolo having died in the meantime. Dandolo's successor as doge of Venice was Pietro Ziani (1205–29), while Marino Zen acted as podestà in Romania. Given the history's generic outlook, however, this was probably insignificant to Choniates. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 357, n. 214 (p. 611).

More horrors were in store for the Byzantines. A division of the Latin army was sent out, which they called “pack” (ῥοῦτα).<sup>104</sup> This division committed manifold and ruthless atrocities during the subjugation of rebellious cities. The Venetians, “like pirates” (πειρατεύοντες), did likewise, plundering the coasts at Panion and Kallipolis. They too committed “the worst deeds and incompatible with Christian customs” (χείριστα καὶ τῶν Χριστιανικῶν ἑθῶν ἀλλότρια)—despite which they are still implicitly identified as Christians. “The evils were of every kind, most painful and unbearable for the Romans who suffered them” (ἦσαν οὖν πολύμορφα τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τοῖς πάσχουσιν αὐτὰ Ῥωμαίοις βαρυαλγέστατα καὶ ἀνύποιστα).<sup>105</sup>

## 2.2 *Between Resignation, Hope, and Exhortation: The Last Pages of Choniates's History*

Choniates's appreciation of Emperor Baldwin's good qualities does not extend to his troops, who are said to have treated the Byzantines horribly, as if God had further suffering in store not just for the Constantinopolitans, but also for the provinces of the empire: if the defeat at Adrianople had spared the Byzantines from a complete Latin conquest, they apparently had not yet paid enough for their sins. Thus Henry of Flanders—Hellenized as Ἐρρῆς—“gave the inhabitants [of Apros] up to slaughter, as if sheep and cattle were to be killed rather than people bearing Christ's name” (τὸ ἐνοικοῦν ἐκδοῦς εἰς σφαγὴν, ὡς εἰ ποῖμνιον ἦν καὶ βουκόλιον, ἀλλ' οὐ Χριστῶνυμον τὸ κτεινόμενον). Henry did so despite the fact that Byzantines had not been willing to change their allegiance but had been constrained by the Vlachs (Kaloyan's subjects), Choniates asserts. It seems that a common religion did not matter to the Latins in this instance, not because eagerness for booty cancelled other considerations, as during the sack of Constantinople, but because they considered that harsh punishment was the most efficient response to disloyalty. In the *Historia*, it is another divine castigation, particularly noteworthy because it is committed by co-religionists: prisoners were dragged through villages and towns and were forced to beg for ransom. If someone became sick or exhausted, the Latins pushed their sword deep into the entrails of their fellow Christians or cut off their heads.<sup>106</sup> To the degree that this is accurate, it can hardly have improved the reputation

104 For this term, derived from the Latin *rumpere* and the medieval Latin *ruta*, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 359, n. 216 (p. 612). The expression appears only in this instance in Byzantine literature and certainly expresses disdain, indicating that these troops were a pack of lawless vagabonds and robbers.

105 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 621(88–5).

106 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 621(11–17).

of the Latin rulers, even though Henry of Flanders also attempted to find a *modus vivendi* with his Byzantine subjects.<sup>107</sup>

What follows relating to Henry's offer to the defenders of Adrianople, albeit in the context of propaganda against collaboration with Latins, suggests that violent suppression did not weaken the resistance to Latin rule but made opponents more determined:

They [the defenders of Adrianople], becoming weary when only hearing of treaties, said that there could be no secure oaths anymore between Romans and Latins because the Latins were once and for all judged by the Romans as unreliable in pledging good faith, savagely brutal to those who join their side and merciless to the defeated in battle.<sup>108</sup>

During the assault on the city, Peter of Bracheux's skull was broken by a stone, a symbolic occurrence, as Peter is described as the "strongest of all and most famous for his prowess" (*κράτιστος ἅμα πάντων καὶ εἰς ἀνδρείαν ὀνομαστότατος*). On the following day, the besieging army carried out a second assault, but the defenders of the city made a sortie, fighting most ferociously. The Latins could not prevent their siege engines from being burned. Vlachs and Cumans assisted the defense by preventing the Latins from getting fresh provisions. Their army was thus in need of reinforcements, which were promptly dispatched under the pressure exerted by "kardinarios [cardinal] Martinos" (the papal legate) and the Latin patriarch Thomas (Morosini), a Venetian.<sup>109</sup> Both threatened to excommunicate the disobedient. The description of the patriarch, which mocks his corpulence and clean-shaven face, reflects the bitterness of wealthy Constantinopolitans such as Choniates about their fate.

There are indications that Morosini did not take Byzantine concerns sufficiently into consideration and that his actions caused resentment. This particularly applies to the conflict over the icon of the Virgin. Strife and difficulties within the Latin Church itself worked against finding a successful *modus vivendi* with the Byzantines, which, according to Angold, Morosini did try to

107 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 621(6–11). See Prinzing (1972), pp. 52–53.

108 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 622(18–27); see p. 622(23–27): "οἱ δὲ καὶ πρὸς μόνην τῆν τῶν συμβάσεων ἐνήχησιν ἀποκναίοντες μὴ Ῥωμαίοις ἐκ τοῦδε καὶ Λατίνοις ἔλεγον εἶναι ὄρκια πιστά, ἐπειδὴ καθάπαξ Λατίνοι τὰ μὲν ἐς πίστιν ἀβέβαιοι, τοῖς δὲ προσχωροῦσι θηριώδεις, τοῖς δὲ πολέμῳ χειρουμένοις ἀνηλεέστατοι παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις ἐγνώσθησαν."

109 Choniates confuses the cardinal deacon Pietro Capuano with Martin of Pairis, which, like so many "errors" in Byzantine historiography, ought to be seen in the context of the generic approach outlined in Ch. 1. See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 363, n. 226 (p. 613).

achieve but without lasting success. The evident recognition on the part of some Latin leaders, notably the regent and later emperor Henry (1205–16), that such a *modus vivendi* was in their best interest, was insufficient. They failed to achieve more successful arrangements that were brought about in other regions such as the Peloponnese.<sup>110</sup>

The subsequent narrative of Latin misfortunes again does not fail to acknowledge their perseverance while implicitly addressing a Byzantine audience. Before fresh troops arrived, a disease broke out in the camp of the besiegers. Choniates attributes it to the corpses they left unburied, as well as their unusual nutrition due to the food shortage. They thus had to retreat to Pamphilion, and reinforcements from Constantinople did not fare any better. Ambushed by Vlach and Cuman troops, nearly all perished. The survivors began building new siege engines, including with tree trunks procured from the mountains of the Propontis under the supervision of “Konon, the count of Petoune,” i.e., Conon of Béthune. These siege engines were strengthened with iron that made them resistant to fire. Deciding that Adrianople was impregnable on the grounds of their painful experience, they turned to Didymoteichon. However, a heavy rain, attributed to divine intervention, caused the nearby Hebros River to flood the plain, and had it occurred during the night the bulk of the army would have been annihilated.<sup>111</sup>

At this point, the *Historia*, while approving of the castigation of the Latins, differentiates once again among them: Frightened by the sinister event, “those among the Latins who dipped in reason and who were not entirely men of bloodshed” (ὁπόσοι τῶν Λατίνων ἐς νοῦν ἔβαπτον, μὴδ’ αἰμάτων ἄνδρες ἐς τὸ παντελὲς ἐτύγγανον ὄντες) thought it best to depart from there and persuaded the others to rapidly follow suit, for they considered it an act of God.<sup>112</sup>

Choniates shames his fellow Byzantines again for their lack of united resistance, deeming this failure deserving of more retribution. Latin arrogance, contempt and distrust of their Greek-speaking subjects hardened their resolve, as he puts it. What the Latins could not do to others, they inflicted on those under their control. Choniates suggests that the continued Byzantine recalcitrance in

110 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 622(28)–623(79). See Lock (1995), ch. 8, esp. pp. 202–203; Angold (2003), chs. 8–9; Van Tricht (2011), ch. 6; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 363, n. 227 (p. 613); Angold (2019). See also *Hist.*, p. 647(4–18), where Morosini is described in similar terms. His priests are also mentioned as beardless, on which see *ibid.*, p. 365, n. 229 (p. 614). For the representation of beards and beardlessness in Byzantine literature, see esp. Ch. 4, p. 172, and Ch. 9, pp. 259, 269–270, 300.

111 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 624(80–12). On Conon of Béthune, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.* trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 365, n. 233 (p. 614).

112 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 624(12–16).



the east contributed to suffering in the west, Thrace standing alone in the dangerous fight for “the freedom of the Romans.” The Byzantines in Asia Minor are accused of apathetically and heartlessly losing thought of their people, causing almost unbearable pain, even when it was in their own best interest to assist. They neglected their duty to God, Choniates laments, having no sensitivity for the horror of their wrongdoing.<sup>113</sup> His critical assessment then focuses further on Byzantine disunity and the rise of Theodoros Laskaris as the leading ruler in Asia Minor.<sup>114</sup>

Choniates adds more nuance to his vilification of the Latin conquerors. Philippoupolis was besieged by Kaloyan, finally suffering the same fate as its “mother” Constantinople. Abandoning his previous stance, Choniates argues for an arrangement with both Latins and Bulgarians, the inhabitants of the city being deprived of help from the east. Some survivors of Philippoupolis, negotiating a treaty, took up service with the Latin Empire—another indication that serving under Latins was not as bad for everyone as Choniates and other sources suggest. The claim that the Latin conquerors were surpassed in barbarism by most of Kaloyan’s troops in several regards adds to this mitigation of Choniates’s condemnation of the Latins. Kaloyan is deemed the worst.<sup>115</sup> However, the account of his renewed offensive, which followed the capture of Philippoupolis and the ruler’s return to Bulgaria, while reviling him as merciless in his lust to kill, expresses criticism of Byzantines by proxy: “He [Kaloyan] said that he could no longer bear their underhandedness, their faithless disposition and their attitude which would change repeatedly in the course of a moment.”<sup>116</sup> Such topical vices are often ascribed to barbarians in contemporary Greek literature, but in this instance are applied to Byzantines. This is another indication that such *topoi* should be interpreted with caution and in their larger context, whomever they are applied to.

Subsequent remarks also improve the image of the Latins in that their virtues are again acknowledged and Kaloyan’s Cumans are portrayed as more nefarious. The army Kaloyan confronted at Adrianople was the strongest body of troops at the disposal of the Latins and included tall, extremely battle-tested warriors. “A certain Teres [Thierry of Tenremonde, constable of the Latin Empire] was in command, one of the most noble and well-born men” (Τερῆς

113 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 624(16)–625(33).

114 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 625(33)–626(75).

115 See above, p. 382, and below,

116 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 627(76)–628(12); see p. 628(10–12): “οὐκέτι φάσκων τὰς σφῶν δολοφροσύνας ὑφίστασθαι δύνασθαι καὶ τὸ ἄπιστον ἦθος καὶ τὸ τῆς αὐτῆς ὥρας πολλάκις παλιμπετές φρόνημα.”

στρατηγούμενος, ἀνὴρ τῶν πάνυ ἐπισήμων καὶ εὐγενῶν). This is one of many passages in Byzantine literary works of the long twelfth century that express common ground with Western concepts of nobility (*eugeneia*). Choniates thus continued to acknowledge this shared marker of identity beyond 1204.<sup>117</sup> Even if the Latins once more fought courageously, Kaloyan's Cumans prevailed. And again, this victory did not aid the Byzantines; the Cumans devastated Apros, inhumanely killing or enslaving its inhabitants. They acted similarly elsewhere, but most cruelly in Athyras, which Choniates intensely laments as offending the divine order. Selymbria and Bizye only escaped capture because they were well defended.<sup>118</sup>

Choniates emphasizes the prowess of the Latins (Ἴταλοί) even more by stating that even their courage sank to the level of sheep. They concealed themselves in Constantinople and remaining Byzantines were allowed either to leave the city or stay. Ultimately, the Cumans retreated, but Kaloyan set his eyes on the capture of Didymoteichon and Adrianople. Choniates commends the bravery of the defenders that contributed to Kaloyan's lifting of the siege. This commendation, like his earlier praise for resistance in Thrace, is perhaps meant as a positive model that the history's audience ought to consider against his predominantly negative assessment of fellow Byzantines. Given the superior numbers and strength of Kaloyan's forces, the defenders of Adrianople and Didymoteichon, however, had called upon the help of Latins in Constantinople, who were hoping for a restoration of their rule in Thrace.<sup>119</sup>

Choniates confirms that Kaloyan's troops were more to be feared than the Latins and caused greater devastation. He provides gruesome details of their cruelty, including the deeds of the Cumans around Easter 1206, deemed the very worst.<sup>120</sup> Inhabitants of central and southern Greece suffered no less. Latins are said to have arrogantly distributed conquests among themselves, like a paternal inheritance.

The bitterest remarks, however, are reserved for fellow Byzantines: former masters—an allusion to imperial ideology, leading social strata, and attitudes of superiority—were conditioned to be servile rather than fight for their freedom. Some were so corrupted by luxury that they sought to profit from the situation, thus “stirring up a widespread ambition against the land of their

117 Villehardouin refers to Thierry of Tenremonde as well: see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 375, n. 259 (p. 619).

118 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 628(12)–631(4). See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 379, n. 272 (p. 620).

119 NIKETAS CHONIATES S, *Hist.*, pp. 631(5)–633(66).

120 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 634(67)–637(24).

own fathers” (εἰς ὄλοσχερῆ φιλοτιμίαν κατὰ τῆς ἑαυτῶν πατρίδος ὑπεκκαέντες). Rather than resist the invaders, they carved out their own tyrannical lordships, even concluding peace treaties with the Latins. Choniates specifically mentions Leon Sgouros (Nauplion and Corinth); Leon Chamaretos (Lakonia); Michael (Epirus), i.e., Michael Komnenos Doukas (Angelos); an unnamed local ruler in Thessaly, and, among the Latins, Boniface.<sup>121</sup> Choniates blames David Komnenos of Trebizond for making common cause with the Latin Empire against the ruler of Nicaea, Theodoros Laskaris. Theodoros, nonetheless, defeated a small Latin army which was allied with David.<sup>122</sup> With the Byzantines being so divided, the invaders and other scoundrels could do their destructive work—Genoese pirates for example.<sup>123</sup>

Choniates’s description of the situation in Asia Minor in 1206 contains remarks on a Latin ruler of Attaleia, Ἀλδεβραντίνος—a member of the Aldobrandini family from Pisa—who had come to rule over the city. “Aldebrantinos hailed from among the Italians, indeed with respect to his origin, but he was wholly brought up according to Roman customs” (Ἀλδεβραντίνος, ἐξ Ἰταλῶν μὲν τὴν γένεσιν ἔλκων, ἀκριβῶς δ’ ἐντεθραμμένος τοῖς Ῥωμαϊκοῖς ἔθεσι). He reports that Aldobrandini collaborated with 200 Latins he called upon from Cyprus to repel a Turkish attack. Aldobrandini’s portrayal resembles that of Pisans and Amalfitans in Constantinople in that Romania’s society was not necessarily closed or “xenophobic” and allowed successful integration up to the point of being considered fully Byzantine.<sup>124</sup>

In the summer of 1206, Baldwin’s brother was anointed emperor (*basileus*).<sup>125</sup> The term *basileus* again indicates a certain legitimacy of Latin rule based on their control of the imperial city.<sup>126</sup> Henry’s anointment provides another occasion for the historian to shame his own people:

A year and four months they had handled the public affairs without an emperor, for they did not allow that the unction of the imperial office be conferred on anyone from his family before they had exact word of Baldouinos’s death. The Romans must hear of this, who, while anointing, quickly think on who shall depose the anointed. Those who take up arms

121 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 637(25)–638(61).

122 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 640(13)–641(63).

123 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 638(62)–640(12).

124 See esp. Part 2 of this book.

125 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 642(64–76).

126 See above, pp. 384–385.

among us, namely, are rightly known to all peoples as matricide vipers, a foolish people, children who bring disgrace and lawless sons.<sup>127</sup>

Choniates reflects the opinion that had the Byzantines refrained from deposing their own rulers—beginning with the regent Maria-Xene and Alexios II in 1182–83—the empire would have endured.

Baldwin's death is described in gruesome detail: the Latin emperor was horribly mutilated and thrown in a ravine where he had to endure immense agony before death finally released him—emphasizing Kaloyan's insane cruelty, Choniates reinforces his previous assessment that the peoples ruled by the tsar of Bulgaria were even more barbarous than the Latins. Konstantinos Tornikes, former logothete of the drome, serves as an example of the great suffering of Byzantines captured by Kaloyan. He thought that he might gain some advantage from the Bulgarian tsar, having previously served as Emperor Baldwin's envoy at Kaloyan's court. He too was killed, although justly, Choniates might imply, for having committed the treachery decried by the historian as one of the worst vices of his people.<sup>128</sup>

It is particularly toward the close of his work that Choniates is more eager to admonish his fellow Byzantines than to criticize the Latins. He recounts the destruction of various statues in Constantinople, but justifies this act, suggesting that the superstition of the common people was to blame rather than the well-founded reaction of the Latins:

The Latins by no means did this out of a cowardly inclination, as someone will proclaim who thinks contemptuously of them, but they were involved in and thought of everything [that ensured] that they would not be deprived of the city on which they had placed their foot, and they considered that such rumors which were not carefully examined must not spread, as they were not commonly reported without reason, but combining intuition with intelligence [suspecting ulterior motives behind

127 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 642(77–85): “ἐνιαυτὸν δ’ ἓνα καὶ μῆνας τέσσαρας ἄνευ βασιλείως τὰ κοινὰ χειρίζοντες πράγματα οὐκ ἄλλως κατένευσαν χρίσμα βασιλείας ὁπωδὴ τῶν ἐκ γένους χαρίσασθαι, εἰ μὴ πρότερον τὸν τοῦ Βαλδουίνου θάνατον ἠκριβώσαντο. Ἀκουέτωσαν ταῦτα Ῥωμαῖοι οἱ χριόντες ἅμα καὶ τὸν διὰ τάχους καθαιρήσοντα τὸν χριόμενον τῷ νῶ συλλαμβάνοντες, εἰκότως οὖν καὶ μητρόλεθροὶ ἔχιδναι καὶ γένος ἀπολαλεκὸς βουλήν καὶ τέκνα μωμητὰ καὶ υἱοὶ ἄνομοι οἱ ἐς ἡμᾶς πρὸς ὄπλα ἔχοντες παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀκούουσιν ἔθνεσιν.”

128 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 642(86)–643(10). See also NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 3, p. 373, n. 257 (p. 619), concerning the description in the LO-version (p. 628[7–14 LO]), and *ibid.*, p. 391, n. 347 (p. 633).

the statues], they deemed it right not to allow [them to be left] unexamined, and they would not give up on any action.<sup>129</sup>

Thus Choniates's statement that those thinking of Latins with contempt might consider the responsible men feeble and cowardly implies his disagreement with such thinking and, with ample other evidence, suggests a complex, ambivalent attitude toward Latins that Choniates similarly displays toward fellow Byzantines. Van Tricht also sees this passage as an indication of Latin interest in Byzantine culture.<sup>130</sup>

Choniates, once more targeting collaboration with the conquerors and with his loss of wealth and status in mind, draws a contrast between Byzantines and Latins by lauding the latter's determination to conquer new lands and establish themselves, even at the risk of losing sight of their origins. Conversely, "our people" do the opposite, i.e., give away everything, are servile and abandon their ancestral lands when confronted with an enemy, not out of a Christian virtue, but forgetting honor, unfit for combat, and more craven than women, which the historian illustrates with a Homeric quotation.<sup>131</sup>

His condemnation of "these people" (fellow Byzantines) goes so far as to say that anyone familiar with them would not be astonished to see them commit suicide to spare their enemies any trouble. Choniates adds that while in their inertness they allowed the enemy to do anything, they knew no restraint when it came to their own people, and no shame in being insolent and reckless. Noting that fellow Byzantines accused "us, the members of the senate" of having caused the fall of the capital, Choniates in turn accuses them of lying most grievously, without fearing the all-seeing eye of justice, and relinquishing the city and its upper social strata. Choniates turns against those who maliciously rejoiced in the fall of Constantinople—plausibly out of provincial resentment over taxation, chicanery from the capital, and related aspirations for local autonomy—and in his loss of status in Nicaea, which is reflected in his extant letters. He claims that he would not have moved there had he known of

129 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 643(11)–644(40); see p. 644(33–40): "Λατίνοι δ' ἔπραττον ταῦτα οὐκ ἐκ δειλάνδρου παντάπασι γνώμης, ὡς ἀποφανεῖται τις καταφρονητικῶς ἔχων ἐς αὐτούς, ἀλλὰ μετιόντες πάντα καὶ διατεχνώμενοι, μὴ πως ἐκπέσωσιν ἢς ἐπέβησαν πόλεως, οὐδὲ τὰ τοιαδὶ τῶν ἀκουσμάτων ἀπεριέργαστα παρατρέχειν ἐδοκίμαζον, οἷα μὴδ' εἰκαίως ὑφ' ἀπάντων διαθρυλλούμενα, ἀλλὰ τὸ εἰκαστικὸν τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ συνάπτοντες ἐδικαίου μὴ εἶαν ἀνεξέταστα, πρὸς οὐδεμίαν τῶν πράξεων ἀναπίπτοντες."

130 Van Tricht (2011), p. 73.

131 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 644(41–53).

this outrage in advance. Choniates reaffirms one of the central messages of his history: the Latin West was not chiefly responsible for the fall of the imperial city, but rather it was the depravity of large parts of Romania's population, not just commoners, but many among the aristocracy and in the imperial government as well.<sup>132</sup>

Choniates intended to write an account of the subsequent history of the successor polities of Romania, as his following remark indicates, though he was unable to do so. The last lines of the work are devoted to a campaign conducted by the Latin emperor Henry in Thrace and serve as a final exhortation of fellow Byzantines. When Henry heard that an army of Cumans and Vlachs was threatening Adrianople,

He was not alarmed because of the great number of adversaries, and he did not at all consider in his mind the misfortunes of the previous wars, but had the courage [to begin] a new campaign. He was eager to save his [...] fellow people and assist the remainder of the Romans who had gathered again in the village-towns not far from the [capital] city. When he had arrived in the vicinity of [the city] of Adrianos he spotted the Vlachs, who were very frightened by the sight of the Latins, but they [the Latins] had not received greater bodies since the previous [battles] nor had they acquired stouter hearts, they merely had not lost their accustomed bravery and skill in wars as a result of the defeats they had suffered [...] he [Henry] accomplished many things and, as a result, took money, men and droves of animals as booty without sustaining any loss, he returned unscathed and arrived in [the city] of Konstantinos.<sup>133</sup>

132 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 644(54)–645(83); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Letters*, esp. nos. 2–10.

133 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 645(84)–646(11); see p. 646(93–11): “μη πρὸς τὸ πλῆθος δείσας τῶν ἀντιπάλων, μηδ’ ἐν νῶ βαλόμενος ὄλωσ τὰ τῶν προτέρων πολέμων ἀτυχήματα, πάλιν τὴν ἔξοδον ἀπεθάρρησε καὶ τοὺς [...] ὁμοφύλους ἐκσῶσαι γλιχόμενος καὶ τὰ τῶν Ῥωμαίων περιθάλψειν ἐγκαταλείμματα, οἱ περὶ τὰς οὐχ ἑκάς τῆς πόλεως κωμοπόλεις αὐθις συνδεδραμήκασι. περὶ τὴν Ἀδριανοῦ τοῖνον κατηντηκῶς καὶ τοὺς Βλάχους καταπτευκῶς, πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν τῶν Λατίνων ἀποδειλιάσαντας, μήτε σώματα λαβόντων μείζονα τῶν προτέρων μήτε ψυχὰς κτησαμένων ἀλκιμωτέρας, τὸ δὲ σύνθηδες θράσος καὶ τὴν ἐν πολέμοις ἔξιν οὐκ ἀπολωλότων οἷς πεπόνθασι [...] πολλὰ μὲν δράσας ἐξ ὧν καὶ χρήματα καὶ σώματα καὶ ζῶων ἀγέλας ἔλαβεν, οὐδὲν δὲ τι καθυπομείνας δεινόν, ἀπαθὴς ὑπέστρεψε καὶ τὴν Κωνσταντίνου κατέλαβεν.”

Thus, even for Choniates, the conquest of 1204, despite its permanent repercussions on Byzantine-Latin relations, did not disrupt ambivalence toward Latins nor the numerous elements of proximity in their portrayal in favor of a monochromatic “anti-Latin” stance.

## (Potential) Alliances

The portrayal of the numerous alliances and attempted or potential alliances with Western powers during the long twelfth century illustrates the continuous complexity and fickleness of Byzantine-Latin relations that have often been distortingly characterized as reflecting mounting hostility and tension. The portrayal follows the introspective and generic tendencies that characterize the representation of Latins overall, yet also exhibits considerable proximity and shared markers of identity. This supports the idea that successful, sometimes even friendly, cooperation and an understanding with Western powers were possible, as exemplified especially under Manouel I, and that the conquest of 1204 was not bound to happen.<sup>1</sup>

### 1 Enerichos (Henry IV) versus the Pope (Gregory VII)

The representation of Henry IV (1056–1106) in the *Alexiad* is a good example of the said genericism and introspection. Although he was Holy Roman Emperor when the West became increasingly relevant for Byzantium<sup>2</sup> and during most of Alexios I's rule, Henry's reign, including the investiture controversy and the struggle against Pope Gregory, receives only limited coverage in Anna's *Alexiad*.<sup>3</sup> Even this limited coverage was due to Henry playing a significant role in the war between the *basileus* and Robert Guiscard, one of the major themes of the *Alexiad*. Anna introduces the quarrel between Henry and Pope Gregory VII by stating that it "is worthy to be related (for it, too, contributed to his [Robert's] success)." The Byzantine government would obviously have regarded relations with the German king as more important than Anna indicates. Like other major concerns of the *basileus* and his advisers, an account of the Holy Roman Empire's relations with Byzantium fell outside the interests of the *Alexiad* with its selective agenda.<sup>4</sup>

1 See esp. Introduction, pp. 13–14, and Ch. 14, p. 381.

2 See Introduction, esp. pp. 1, 13.

3 For an overview of the reign of Emperor Henry IV, see Althoff (2006); (2009).

4 ANNA KOMNENE, *HIST.* 1.13.1, p. 43(80–81): "ἄξιον ἀφηγγήσασθαι (ἔστι γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο εἰς εὐτυχίαν τούτου ἀναφερόμενον)." See the similar assessment of Vučetić (2012), p. 470. Earlier histories (Attaleiates, the Skylitzes continuation, and Bryennios), which all cover



In recognition of the contribution of the opposition between Gregory VII and “Enerichos, king of Alamania” to the Norman-papal alliance, Anna refers to royal and papal accusations. Against Henry, she cites the selling of bishoprics and the elevation of unworthy candidates to episcopal rank, against the pope the charge of usurpation, i.e., unlawful election. While reflecting Western evidence, her summary contains an inaccurate detail—the pope did not charge the king with simony, but rather bishops in his entourage. Such inaccuracies were irrelevant for Anna’s probable purposes.<sup>5</sup>

Anna strongly disparages the pope and his mistreatment of Henry’s envoys,<sup>6</sup> which may have to do with his initial support for and later toleration of Robert Guiscard’s campaign against Byzantium (1081–85).<sup>7</sup> It may also be seen as a Byzantine reaction against the aspirations of the reform papacy, which were presumptuous not only from the standpoint of Byzantines.<sup>8</sup> In order to give significance to the incident with the king’s envoys, which might have been invented,<sup>9</sup> Anna declares that it triggered a war and the pope’s expedient alliance with Guiscard. He had been the pope’s bitter enemy, as both Anna and Western accounts agree. She specifies that Gregory had supported two counter-kings, “Landoulphos” (Duke Rudolf of Swabia)<sup>10</sup> and “Welfos” (Welf IV of Bavaria). It was likely of no interest to Anna that only Rudolf (1077–80), supported by Welf, became king in opposition to Henry and was recognized by Gregory only *ex eventu*.<sup>11</sup> A bloody battle, with 30,000—which equates with “many”—casualties,<sup>12</sup> resulted in Henry’s victory, mainly achieved because Rudolf was wounded and later died from his injuries. This is a reference to the

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events beyond 1077 (the events at Canossa), do not mention the quarrel between king and pope, on which see Vučetić (2012), p. 467 and n. 8.

5 Vučetić (2012), pp. 471–472.

6 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* 1.13.3–5, pp. 43(97)–44(29).

7 See Ch. 9, pp. 251–252, and below, p. 409. There are similar narratives of Gregory VII’s mistreatment of Henry IV’s envoys in Western sources and the mistreatment of envoys more generally has been identified as a narrative strategy. See Drocourt (2015), pp. 649–650, 659.

8 Siecienski (2017), pp. 256–261.

9 Vučetić (2012), pp. 473–474.

10 Anna employed for him a similar Lombard name which was familiar to her, see Vučetić (2012), p. 469 and n. 13. For the naval commander Landoulphos in the *Alexiad*, see Ch. 7, p. 223.

11 Vučetić (2012), p. 475.

12 For Anna’s use of such hyperbolic figures, which is a broader historiographical phenomenon, see also Ch. 9, pp. 253, 254, 255, 261, 266, and Ch. 10, pp. 311, 312, 316.

battle on the Elster in October 1080. Its description is reminiscent of Homer, and consistent with the Komnenian affinity with bellicose epics.<sup>13</sup>

Western military prowess is therefore acknowledged here as akin to that upheld by the Komnenian military aristocracy with which Anna identifies.

Anna then attacks papal primacy and ascribes primacy to the see of Constantinople,<sup>14</sup> a position not in line with the second ecumenical council held in Constantinople (381), the fourth ecumenical council in Chalcedon (451), or the council in Trullo (691/92). It corresponds, however, to tendencies of the middle Byzantine period, represented in other sources. Primacy was one of numerous issues debated between Byzantine and Western representatives in the long twelfth century, a plurality of positions being characteristic of the Byzantine side. Anna's statement may also be seen as a reaction to the lofty pretensions (not only from a Byzantine standpoint) of the reform papacy.<sup>15</sup> Above all, however, it is in line with the characteristic arrogance (*ἀλαζονεία*) she ascribes to Westerners which does not necessarily reflect Byzantine attitudes but, for the *Alexiad's* purposes, makes them difficult to deal with and imperial accomplishments even more remarkable.<sup>16</sup> The equally arrogant Guiscard opted for the pope and promised assistance against King Henry.<sup>17</sup>

Later in the narrative, when Anna speaks of measures Alexios took to counteract the Norman invasion, she brings up a diplomatic offensive in the West to stab Robert in the back. Alexios's envoys tempted various rulers by offering gifts and promising far greater rewards and honors should they turn against the Norman duke. However, the *basileus* perceived that the "king of Alamania" was in the best position to hinder Guiscard and therefore sent letters, "winning [Henry] over with flattering words and manifold promises" (*διὰ μελιχίων λόγων καὶ παντοίων ὑποσχέσεων ὑποποιησάμενος*). Perceiving that the king was receptive, he sent a new embassy under Konstantinos Choirospaktes with another letter. Anna quotes this document in full, underlining its importance.<sup>18</sup>

The letter serves to address Alexios's skill as a diplomat, but also his Christian faith which, according to Anna's portrayal, is shared by Henry but

13 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.13.1–9, pp. 43(80)–46(83). See Lilie (2014), esp. pp. 184–190, and p. 190: "Epic inclusions [...] primarily illustrate and dramatize factual events—warfare, in particular." On the battle on the Elster, see also Althoff (2006), pp. 173–176.

14 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.13.4, p. 44(15–24).

15 Siecienski (2017), pp. 256–261.

16 Buckler (1929), ch. 47; Darrouzès (1965); Smythe (1992), ch. 5; Bayer (2002), esp. pp. 9–14, 47–48, 72–76, 142–143, 191–199; Chadwick (2003), pp. 106–107, 228–232.

17 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* I.13.10, pp. 46(83)–47(4), I.14.3, p. 48(25–47).

18 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* III.10, pp. 112(50)–114(34).

not the pope and Robert. Gregory had excommunicated Alexios,<sup>19</sup> and his and Robert's impiety is amply described in the letter.<sup>20</sup> The document, dated to the spring of 1083 and deemed by Kresten to be authentic,<sup>21</sup> stresses the importance of the shared Christian faith. Henry is addressed flatteringly as "most Christian brother," although that implied an inferior rank with respect to the Byzantine *basileus*. Referring to Henry's piety several times, Alexios expresses the wish that God will bless the king's reign and help him to defeat all his enemies. However, monetary incentives were employed. In addition to twenty titles implying imperial overlordship, the letter speaks of 100 purple cloths and 144,000 nomismata to be given in advance in the form of both wrought silver and high-quality gold coins. As for an invasion of Longibardia, Alexios promises an additional sum of 216,000 nomismata and an honorary salary for the titles. Their acceptance and the precious gifts offered imply a stronger obligation to imperial overlordship, as does the stipulation that Henry must swear an oath to the emperor.<sup>22</sup> The gifts reinforce the Christian aspect of the alliance, notably a valuable pectoral cross (ἐγκόλπιον) and other relics. The letter also envisages a matrimonial alliance between a nephew of Alexios and a relative of Henry.<sup>23</sup>

It naturally follows for Anna that Alexios's efforts encouraged Henry's invasion of southern Italy, governed by Guiscard's son Roger. Henry was unwilling to risk battle with the Norman duke when he heard of Robert's victory over the *basileus*, from which Alexios had barely escaped with his freedom and life. Guiscard's absence, however, weakened Norman efficiency against Alexios, which allows Anna to celebrate her father's diplomacy as successful nevertheless. Generally celebrating Alexios's genius, she does not blame Henry for his retreat and deems his reaction understandable given that even the *basileus* suffered setbacks against the Normans. Henry returned home and "considered it a victory not to expose himself to unnecessary dangers."<sup>24</sup> Gerd Althoff, in his assessment of Henry's retreat, states that the reasons for the behavior of

19 Gregory had also excommunicated Nikephoros III and justified this step, just like the excommunication of Alexios, with the deposition of Michael VII (1078). See Lounghis (1980b), p. 200; Bayer (2002), pp. 146, 154; Vučetić (2012), p. 490.

20 See also Ch. 9, pp. 249–250, 251.

21 See the detailed investigation in Kresten (1997), pp. 31–37, 44–55.

22 Anca (2010), pp. 108, 113–114.

23 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. III.10, pp. 112(50)–114(34). On the exchange between Henry and Alexios, see also Dölger and Wirth (1995), no. 1068, p. 87, no. 1077, p. 90–91, no. 1080, p. 93, no. 1114, p. 103. For the portrayal of marriage alliances, see esp. Ch. 3.

24 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. V.3, pp. 146(59)–149(47); see V.3.7, p. 148(39–40): "νίκην λογισάμενος τὸ μὴ κινδύνοις ἑαυτὸν ὑποβαλεῖν ἐπὶ μηδενὶ δέοντι."

the Western emperor must remain in doubt. However, it is conceivable that Henry's magnates and troops were unwilling to risk a campaign in Italy after their ruler's imperial coronation. Anna's statement thus may be congruent with the feelings of Henry's followers in 1084, if not those of the emperor himself. In any case, she conveys the magnitude of the Norman threat contained by her father for which Henry fulfills the function of a witness.<sup>25</sup>

## 2 Anna's Hindsight and Ἰσαγγέλης (Raymond of Saint-Gilles)

In the *Alexiad*, Raymond of Saint-Gilles, count of Toulouse, duke of Narbonne and margrave of Provence, is associated with the struggle between Emperor Alexios and the Hautevilles Robert Guiscard, Bohemond, and Tancred. Motivated by the rivalry between Bohemond and Raymond from the First Crusade, Anna praises Raymond and depicts him among the crusaders as Bohemond's opposite.<sup>26</sup>

Ἰσαγγέλης—a Greek rendering of Saint-Gilles<sup>27</sup>—is introduced abruptly during the narrative of the passage of the First Crusade, which focuses on Bohemond, Alexios's adversary. Anna's chief interest in Raymond is his relation to the Norman:<sup>28</sup>

He [Alexios] loved Isangeles in a special way due to the superiority of his mind and because of his flawless reputation and the purity of his way of life, and also because he simultaneously perceived how much he [Raymond] was devoted to the truth, for he never accorded preference to anything else; he differed in everything from all the [other] Latins, as much as the sun from the stars.<sup>29</sup>

This hyperbolic praise accords special status to one who was like an angel—as the name Ἰσαγγέλης was understood among “all Latins,” by which Anna probably refers mainly to the crusaders and their leaders. Raymond's sincerity

25 Althoff (2006), pp. 192–195.

26 See Ch. 9, p. 267, Ch. 10, pp. 317, 318.

27 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.*, trans. Reinsch, p. 359, n. 205.

28 Lilie (1993a), pp. 181–182.

29 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.11.9, p. 320(23–27): “τὸν δὲ γε Ἰσαγγέλην ἠγάπα διαφερόντως διὰ τὸ περιὸν αὐτῷ τοῦ φρονήματος καὶ τῆς ὑπολήψεως τὸ ἀνόθευτον καὶ τὸ τοῦ βίου καθαρὸν, γινώσκων ἅμα καὶ ὅποσον αὐτῷ τῆς ἀληθείας μέλει μηδὲν ταύτης μηδέποτε προτιμωμένῳ· τοσοῦτον γὰρ ἀπάντων τῶν Λατίνων ἐν πάσι διέφερον ὅσον ἀστέρων ἥλιος.”

contrasts sharply with Bohemond's duplicity.<sup>30</sup> According to the *Alexiad*, the emperor was so fond of Saint-Gilles—enjoying his company in contrast to other Latin leaders he had to deal with in the palace—that he invited him to remain after the crusaders crossed to Asia Minor. It has been established, however, that Raymond was not the last leader of the crusade to depart Constantinople. Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Blois left the capital over two weeks after the count. It seems that no other source indicates a meeting with the emperor at this time, let alone several.<sup>31</sup> Anna, however, has Alexios inform his friend of his assessment of the Franks and warn him against Bohemond. Raymond contrasts himself with the Norman, stressing Bohemond's perjury and treachery while submitting his own good will.<sup>32</sup> As noted by Lilie, Raymond serves as the chief Latin witness to the depravity of the Hautevilles in the *Alexiad*.<sup>33</sup>

What is important regarding this characterization is that Anna testifies to the reputation Raymond enjoyed among the Latins due to his virtues, which implies that their own disposition was not wholly bad.<sup>34</sup> This is an important relativization made by Anna herself of her vilification of the crusaders and assurance that Raymond was so very different from all of them.

Anna further singles Raymond out: "purer than the others" (ἀγνότερος τῶν ἄλλων) in terms of his faith, the crusaders entrusted him with the newly recovered Holy Lance.<sup>35</sup> When recounting Raymond's exploits in the Holy Land, she contrasts him with Tancred as well as Bohemond. Raymond complied with Alexios's request to hand over Laodikeia and two fortresses to imperial commanders. He won a splendid victory over the atabeg of Damascus. Bohemond, instead, sent a force under Tancred against Laodikeia. Saint-Gilles, in vain, attempted to dissuade Tancred from the ultimately successful siege.<sup>36</sup>

Alluding to his virtues and reputation, the *Alexiad* affirms that Raymond was invited to receive the crown of Jerusalem after Godfrey of Bouillon's death. It specifies, however, that Saint-Gilles was not chosen because he hesitated—implicit praise of his humility. More reliable sources establish that Raymond's chance to become king of Jerusalem had been prior to the election

30 See Ch. 9, p. 267.

31 According to Lilie (1987), p. 102, Raymond departed from the vicinity of Constantinople around 10 May 1097, whereas Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Blois, reached the capital on 14 May and stayed there for two full weeks.

32 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x.11.9, pp. 320(27)–321(42).

33 Lilie (1993a), p. 181. This portrayal is colored by hindsight, of course, as shown in Ch. 9, pp. 261–262, 263.

34 See the following discussion.

35 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x1.6.8, p. 341(12–13).

36 ANNA KOMNENE, *Hist.* x1.7.4–7, pp. 343(83)–345(44). See also Lilie (1993b), pp. 70–71.

of Godfrey.<sup>37</sup> Regardless, what mattered to Anna was to stress the respect Raymond enjoyed.<sup>38</sup>

Raymond is accorded a flattering role in the crusade of 1101. Rather than going straight to Jerusalem, Raymond traveled to Constantinople, where he received a warm welcome and witnessed the arrival of a new crusade.<sup>39</sup> Alexios's favorite gave prudent advice to the crusaders, based, of course, on that of the emperor. The Norman crusaders, unwilling to listen, were then slaughtered by the Turks with few exceptions. Saint-Gilles escaped and returned to the Holy Land after another visit to the Byzantine capital. Before conquering Tripolis, he fell ill and died, his nephew William succeeding him. Alexios sent an embassy with funds whose task was to persuade William to "swear to the emperor to cherish the same steadfast loyalty to him that his deceased uncle Isangeles had observed until the end" (ὁμωμοκέναι πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα πίστιν βεβαίαν φυλάξαι εἰς αὐτὸν καὶ ὅποιαν ὁ ἀποβεβιωκῶς θεῖος αὐτοῦ Ἰσαγγέλης μέχρι τέλους ἐτήρησεν).<sup>40</sup>

Raymond's son, Count Bertrand of Toulouse, or in Anna's Greek version Πελεκτράνος, reinforces this portrayal of his father. When Bertrand replaced William, an embassy was dispatched to remind Bertrand "of the loyalty of his father, which he had observed with respect to the emperor" (τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ πίστεως, ἦν πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα ἐτήρησεν). Bertrand was also asked to counter the perjurer Tancred and win barons to the emperor's cause. After Bertrand's death, the Byzantines reminded his son Pons—anonymous in the *Alexiad*—and the bishop of Tripolis of the loyalty of his father and grandfather Saint-Gilles to the emperor. Pons was not so honorable and refused to deliver the money and gifts granted to his father. After tedious negotiations, the Byzantine envoys obtained an oath of fealty to the *basileus* by threatening the withdrawal of provisions for the Latins from Cyprus as well as allowing Pons to keep part of the money.<sup>41</sup>

Anna, in accordance with her main goal of propagating her father's achievements, and implicitly diminishing those of his successors,<sup>42</sup> thus chose to

37 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.8.1, p. 346(45–49). See ANNA KOMNENE, Hist., trans. Reinsch, p. 386, n. 124; Frankopan (2012), p. 179.

38 On other chronological imprecisions and confusions in Anna's narrative of events surrounding Raymond and Laodikeia, see Lilie (1993b), pp. 260–275.

39 He arrived in the summer of 1100, as shown by Lilie (1993b), p. 67.

40 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XI.8.1–5, pp. 346(49)–348(22). Lilie (1993b), p. 82, thinks it unlikely that the envoys persuaded William, but that does not affect Anna's point that Raymond's loyalty to the emperor was exemplary.

41 ANNA KOMNENE, Hist. XIV.2.6–8, 14, pp. 429(74)–431(26), 434(6–27).

42 See e.g., Lilie (1993a), p. 177; also Ch. 10, pp. 310, 312.

portray Saint-Gilles as a perfect counterpart of the Hautevilles, recognizing the rivalry between Raymond and Bohemond. However, this opposition did not exist from the outset but emerged only during the crusade.

Whether he was devoted to the Byzantine cause as Anna describes is doubtful. Raymond was the most persistent of all leaders of the First Crusade in refusing the oath of fealty demanded by the emperor. Resisting the pressure of his fellow crusaders, he finally persuaded Alexios to accept a limited oath.<sup>43</sup> He avoided the meeting at Pelekanon and probably pressure to swear the oath given by the other leaders of the crusade there.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, nothing in the *Alexiad* indicates Byzantine assaults on Raymond's troops, reported by Western sources. The count later accused Alexios of these incidents.<sup>45</sup> Raymond, who strongly argued for Byzantine rights to Antioch when Bohemond claimed the city, became his rival at this time. His enmity toward Bohemond is more likely to have been his primary motivation than devotion to the imperial cause and perhaps also the practical understanding that the crusaders, unable to afford Romania's hostility, would have to rely on good relations with and the assistance of the empire.<sup>46</sup> By the time he sought out Alexios in Constantinople in 1100, Raymond's military forces had been reduced to about 500 men. The failure of the crusade of 1101 would deal a severe blow to his prestige. His formal recognition of Alexios as overlord was not primarily a consequence of the count's high ideals or devoted attachment to the *basileus* but rather one of necessity.<sup>47</sup>

### 3 The Hohenstaufen and Austrian Alliance

The alliance of Komnenoi and Staufers (1142–1150s) and between Ioannes II and Lothair of Supplinburg (1125–37) is mentioned or alluded to by Byzantine historians only insofar as it concerns Byzantium directly. Kinnamos has more to say than Choniates, but their accounts are complemented by some encomiasts, especially Theodoros Prodromos and the so-called Manganeios. Both Kinnamos and Choniates wrote decades later, influenced by Byzantium's strained relations with Frederick I and Henry VI.<sup>48</sup>

43 Lilie (1987), pp. 132–134; (1993b), pp. 10–11; Shepard (1988a), pp. 232–233; Frankopan (2012), p. 127, 133–135.

44 Lilie (1993b), pp. 15, 26.

45 Lilie (1987), pp. 101–102; Shepard (1988a), pp. 205–207; Harris (2014), p. 66.

46 Lilie (1987), p. 103; (1993b), pp. 16, 49–50; Thomas (1991), p. 290; Frankopan (2012), p. 197.

47 Lilie (1993b), p. 69; (2004), pp. 213–214.

48 For general bibliographic references, see Ch. 11, p. 322, and Ch. 12, p. 340.

Byzantine historiographers do not address Ioannes II's alliance with Lothair III, unless it is reflected in Kinnamos's positive assessment of Lothair.<sup>49</sup> Lothair invaded Longibardia—i.e., southern Italy—and suffered a defeat against Roger II, which is ascribed to a “foolish and barbarian custom” on the part of one of Lothair's relatives. Lothair was forced to retreat as a result, then died in despair.<sup>50</sup> This story is probably anecdotal.<sup>51</sup>

A more substantial account is given of the treaty of Thessalonike, as it provided political orientation for Manouel until the 1170s. It was, therefore, of more importance than the short alliance between Lothair and Ioannes. When he returned from the crusade, Conrad III concluded a previously negotiated agreement with the emperor in Thessalonike (late 1148/early 1149), swearing under oath, together with his nephew Frederick according to Kinnamos, that “Italy” (i.e., Apulia and Calabria), once captured from the Normans, would be assigned as a dowry to Empress Eirene, his relative (ξυγγενής) whom Conrad had betrothed to the emperor.<sup>52</sup> Conrad likely did swear such an oath but may have played for time. In any case, he died three years after the crusade without having traveled to Italy. Frederick, whether he had sworn an oath or not, was portrayed by Kinnamos as having abandoned the agreement. This alleged previous agreement is omitted by Choniates.<sup>53</sup>

The marriage between Conrad's half-brother Henry of Austria and Theodora Komnene served to strengthen the alliance at that time. Kinnamos, when he introduces the marriage alliance in the context of Henry of Austria's involvement in Manouel's dealings with Hungary, affirms that it has often been mentioned previously.<sup>54</sup> Since this is not the case, perhaps it can be explained by the loss of passages in the transmission of the original, but it indicates that Kinnamos considered the marriage alliance important. He possibly left his work unfinished but may have intended to add passages relating to the alliance. It is mentioned again during a discussion of Manouel's relations with Hungary. Henry, now introduced as “duke of the Austrians” (Ἐρρίκος Ὁστροιχίων

49 See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 88(20–23): “Louteres [...] was really old and far gone in age, but [...] possessed a noble nature and did not know how to speak and act save with simplicity” (Λουτήρης, γέρων μὲν καὶ ἄλλως ἀκριβῶς ὢν καὶ ἡλικίας πόρρω ἦκων, φύσει δὲ καλοκαγαθία συνῶν ἀεὶ καὶ οὐδὲν ὅ τι μὴ σὺν ἀπλότητι καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν εἰδώς).

50 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 90(1)–91(3).

51 See Houben (2010), pp. 71–73, on Lothair's campaign against Roger II.

52 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 87(2–11).

53 Tounta (2011); Dendorfer (2013).

54 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 236(13–15).



δοῦξ), helped to negotiate an armistice with Hungary and acted as mediator between his nephew Frederick and Manouel during their rivalry.<sup>55</sup>

Brief as these remarks may be, they suggest an awareness of the importance of Austria as a rising political power and a buffer between the Komnenian and the Hohenstaufen spheres of influence. This is the earliest reference to “Austria” or “Austrians” respectively in a Greek source.<sup>56</sup> Kinnamos also alludes to the maintenance of good relations between Manouel and Henry despite the conflict with Barbarossa, the emperor treating the duke favorably when he requested an armistice with Hungary. The fact that Henry married his daughter to King Stephen III of Hungary at the end of 1166 is not represented as a hostile move against Romania.<sup>57</sup> Manouel would soon achieve a victory over Hungary, and Henry was interested above all in keeping a balance between the Holy Roman Empire, Hungary, and Romania.<sup>58</sup>

Choniates and Kinnamos indicate that Frederick, in contrast to his uncle Henry, was not bound by marriage ties to Byzantium, especially after Eirene-Bertha's death in 1160, and did not feel obligated to continue the alliance. According to Kinnamos, Frederick began his rule letting the Byzantines hope for continued cooperation. The treaty of Constance of 1153, in which Frederick promised not to cede any land in Italy to Byzantium,<sup>59</sup> goes unmentioned. The Byzantine emperor, like Western powers, often considered political agreements binding only if they were to their advantage. Moreover, the treaty itself suggests that the provision concerning Byzantium was not considered a permanent arrangement.<sup>60</sup>

Kinnamos, once more indicating Byzantine-Western proximity, emphasizes that Frederick was looking for a bride in possession of noble birth (*eugeneia*). Maria, Manouel's niece, outstanding in both birth and beauty, caught his interest. Praise of Maria's qualities is meant to reflect well on Manouel, the hero of Kinnamos's history. What is significant politically is that “he [Frederick] promised to fulfill everything which his uncle Conrad and he, when they returned

55 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 261(11–15). See also Lamma (1957, vol. 2), pp. 56–57; Georgi (1990), pp. 111–112; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 81–83.

56 Rhoby (2012), pp. 606–607.

57 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 262(8–19).

58 Contrary to Georgi's opinion, the marriage alliance between Austria and Hungary was not necessarily concluded to strengthen Hungary against Byzantium, even if Henry sent some contingents to fight in Stephen III's army against the Byzantine troops. After the peace treaty of 1167, the matter presumably was less relevant in any case. See Makk (1989), pp. 99–102; Georgi (1990), pp. 169–172.

59 Todt (1993), p. 136.

60 Lilie (1984a), pp. 443–444; Niederkorn (2000), pp. 234–244.

to Palestine, had promised toward assisting the Romans in the acquisition of Italy.”<sup>61</sup>

Manouel accepted the proposal and sent envoys to Frederick. The latter, however, showed his true face: “[...] when they came to speech with him, they observed that he intended nothing concrete, and returned unsuccessful [...].” Frederick was persuaded to send new envoys, whereupon Manouel sent an embassy on his part.<sup>62</sup> Choniates mentions that some important men from countries that were friendly with the king of the “Alamanni,” formerly ill-disposed toward the Byzantines, had been persuaded by the emperor’s agent, the *prōtostratōr* Alexios, to join the Byzantine side in the war.<sup>63</sup> The historians stay silent about Frederick since the negotiations led to no conclusion, or they did not find it worthwhile to investigate. Barbarossa was indeed willing to intervene in southern Italy but could not persuade his followers to join him. His intention was not to cede land to Byzantium in the event of a successful conquest, but to restore the imperial rule that he claimed over the kingdom. In any case, Manouel’s offensive against the Normans convinced Frederick and his advisers that their political agenda was irreconcilable with that of the *basileus*, and thus Frederick abandoned the Byzantine marriage project.<sup>64</sup>

Kinnamos then gives the incorrect impression that all attempts at renewing the alliance from the Byzantine side ceased. The Hohenstaufen ruler’s political agenda made it expedient to support Frederick’s adversaries. Nevertheless, Manouel signaled that he was willing to come to a new agreement, provided that Frederick change his policy regarding southern Italy.<sup>65</sup> The continuing diplomatic negotiations in the 1160s, when Frederick had difficulties in the Italian war, are mentioned, but they are presented as if only the German ruler had any interest.<sup>66</sup> Kinnamos’s brief reference to Henry the Lion’s journey to Constantinople and the Holy Land in 1172 gives the same impression. Having

61 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 134(13)–135(7); see p. 135(4–7): “πάντα ποιήσιν ἐπαγγελλόμενος ὅποσα Κορράδος τε ὁ θεῖος καὶ αὐτός, ὀπηγίκα Παλαιστίνης ἀνέστρεφον, ἐπὶ τῇ Ἰταλίας κατακτήσει Ῥωμαίοις ὑπηρετήσιν ὑπέσχοντο.”

62 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 135(7)–136(2); see p. 135(10–11): “ἐπειδὴ περ εἰς λόγους ἦλθον αὐτῷ, μηδὲν ὑγίης βεβουλευσθαι τὸν ἄνδρα διαγρόντες ἄπρακτοι ἐκείθεν ἀπηλλάττοντο.”

63 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 97(78)–98(86).

64 Georgi (1990), pp. 24–27; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 56–61; Todt (1993), p. 137. An allusion in Manganeios suggests that Alexios Axouchos presented some diplomatic gifts to Frederick at Ancona in 1158, attempting to maintain amicable relations. See MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *De Manganis*, no. 12, p. 126(71–77). Rahewin confirms this impression: see Magdalino (1993b), p. 63.

65 Todt (1993), p. 143.

66 See Ch. 12, p. 345.

arrived in the capital “with a very great suite,” Henry, the “duke of the Saxons” (Σαξόνων δούξ), negotiated with Manouel on Frederick’s behalf. “After he had achieved what he came for, he departed.”<sup>67</sup>

The emperor’s political actions demonstrate that he was still willing to renew the alliance with the Staufers, negotiating through an exchange of several embassies. Nothing came of what Henry offered Manouel, but the emperor continued to hope for an alliance with Barbarossa. Ultimately, Manouel even broke with Venice and Sicily without gaining German assistance. The encomiast Kinnamos, in order not to cast a shadow on Manouel’s successes, is brief on Henry’s mission.<sup>68</sup> The very mention of Henry, nonetheless, signals the importance of the duke in Byzantium’s relations with the Western emperor.<sup>69</sup>

The portrayal and history of Byzantine-German relations therefore illustrate the fickleness of Byzantine-Western relations more generally.<sup>70</sup>

By contrast, imperial encomia, being contemporary, show more interest in the connections between the two dynasties. Manganeios Prodromos, in a poem composed for the occasion of the marriage between Henry and Theodora, acknowledges Henry as “most famous duke” (δοῦξ μεγαλόδοξος), but proclaims that he will be glorified by Theodora’s superior rank. He further stresses that Manouel has put the Latin kings’ lofty pretensions in their place.<sup>71</sup> The message of such encomia was that there could be no doubt as to who was the supreme Christian ruler in the context of the numerous alliances with Western powers: alliances with the imperial family were never on equal terms but amounted to an acceptance of Byzantine superiority. Manganeios was in the employ of the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene, Theodora’s mother; four of his poems deal with her daughter. The marriage, mourned as a tragedy depriving the *sebastokratorissa* of her child, is portrayed as a union of opposites. Henry is referred to in unflattering terms, as “beast from the West” (θῆρ ἐσπέριος). In another poem, Manganeios expresses joy at the reunification of Eirene and Theodora, who visits her mother in Constantinople, and compares Theodora’s return to a resurrection from the dead.<sup>72</sup>

67 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 286(13–18).

68 Lilie (1984a), pp. 485–497, 522, 524; (1992), pp. 165–168; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 93–95, 462; Todt (1993), pp. 149–151; Angold (1997), p. 214; Fried (1998).

69 Georgi (1990), p. 114.

70 See Introduction, pp. 13–14.

71 See the edition and German translation of the poem in Heilig (1944), pp. 245–252; Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), pp. 114–115; Rhoby (2012), pp. 590–591.

72 Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 116; Rhoby (2012), pp. 601–606.

While these remarks could be interpreted as an artful expression of Eirene's feelings about living far from her daughter, they may also be connected with Eirene's Norman roots, which might explain her disapproval of the Hohenstaufen alliance, given the hostile relations between the Norman kingdom of Sicily and the Staufers.<sup>73</sup>

Theodoros Prodromos applauds Conrad's virtue and noble birth in his greeting poem for Eirene-Bertha of 1142 but, reaffirming Byzantine ecumenism,<sup>74</sup> refers to him as "great king of Old Rome," implying an inferior rank. He stresses the king's elevation in rank through the impending marriage alliance.<sup>75</sup> This can be read as a rebuttal of Conrad's allegation that mother Rome is superior to her daughter, New Rome, and of his title *imperator Romanorum*, which he used in a letter to Ioannes II in February 1142.<sup>76</sup>

#### 4 Antioch

Antioch likely was the crusader polity that the Byzantine government was most interested in. It had fallen to the Turks only in 1084, not long before the First Crusade. It was of strategic importance and the seat of a patriarch. Komnenian literary works reflect this. From Alexios to Manouel, the Komnenoi had sought to obtain recognition of their overlordship of the city, at times even a restoration of direct Byzantine rule. Given links between the principality of Antioch and the West, the Komnenian emperors recognized that a durable and beneficial extension of their influence in Antioch could only be achieved by obtaining support in the West through diplomatic means.<sup>77</sup>

73 Heilig (1944), pp. 229–271; Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 116; Jeffreys (2012), p. 178; Rhoby (2012), p. 606.

74 See Ch. 1, p. 154.

75 THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 20, pp. 319–322. Playful comparisons between Old and New Rome, obviously unfavorable to the former, often appear in the work of Manganeios. See Magdalino (1993b), p. 447.

76 Todt (1988), p. 116.

77 On the importance of Antioch to the Byzantines and the celebration of the city in imperial panegyric, also reflected in historiography, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 65, n. 130 (pp. 532–533); Zorzi (2012), p. 55; Harris (2014), pp. 80–81; Neocleous (2019), pp. 55–56. More generally on the relations between Antioch, other crusader polities and Byzantium, see Lilie (1993b, 2004); Harris (2014); Buck (2017).

#### 4.1 *The Praise of Raimountos*

Therefore, Ioannes II was amenable to a marriage alliance between his youngest son Manouel and Constance, daughter of Prince Bohemond II of Antioch, who had fallen in battle in 1130. The initiative came from leading Latins of Antioch, although they quickly changed their position. Kinnamos does not specify their reasons, but states that through the marriage “the affairs of the Antiochenes would be under him [the emperor’s authority]” (τὰ Ἀντιοχέων ὑπ’ αὐτῷ πράγματα ἔσται). He implies that Ioannes would have obtained the power to reinstate Antioch’s Byzantine patriarch in his see. The idea of being supported by the empire’s resources and military power appeared attractive to the Antiochene nobles, and it was prudent to placate an emperor who had the potential to intervene in Syria to their detriment or benefit. However, the preservation of the principality’s power structures was also in their interest. Resources and military support were understood to materialize only in return for concessions that entailed potential damage to Antioch’s relations with the West, the papacy in particular.<sup>78</sup> Kinnamos appears less interested in the marriage negotiations than in Ioannes II’s exploits in Syria, although he mentions that he was not an eyewitness as he had not yet been born, and that he had not received a faithful account,<sup>79</sup> which may explain why he does not mention the exact terms of the agreement concluded between Prince Raymond and Ioannes II during the emperor’s expedition in 1137. The silence may obscure that Ioannes probably tried to subvert the agreement and suffered retaliation: a riot in Antioch ousted the Byzantines in 1138.<sup>80</sup> As in so many cases, it should not be assumed that Kinnamos could not obtain such information, but rather that it was unhelpful to his cause. A revision of his work might have been more precise, but he probably left it unfinished.<sup>81</sup>

The flattering portrayal of Constance’s first husband, the “count of Petoué” (κόμης Πετούης), i.e., Raymond of Poitiers, later prince of Antioch by marriage, is characterized by the Byzantine appreciation of Western military prowess, which resembled the military ideals of the Komnenian aristocracy. It is also influenced by the fact that the historical work dates from the time when Raymond’s daughter, Maria, was empress and regent. Accordingly, the

78 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 65, n. 130 (p. 533); Lilie (1993b), pp. 103–104; (2004), pp. 74–75; Buck (2017), pp. 70–73, 76–77, 84–85, 191–192. On the relationship between Romania under Ioannes II and the principality of Antioch, see also Parnell (2010); Papageorgiou (2017), pp. 258–271, 327ff.

79 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 16(5)–21(2).

80 Lilie (1993b), p. 121; Buck (2017), pp. 194–199.

81 See Ch. 1, p. 49.

encomiastic historiographer had reason to exalt Raymond's memory due to his close kinship with the imperial family.<sup>82</sup> Raymond is praised for his "beauty and size" (κάλλος τε καὶ μέγεθος), to be associated with the beauty of his daughter, the empress Maria. The encounter with Byzantine scouts on Raymond's way from Jerusalem to Antioch, when he prevented a fall from his horse, is meant as an omen foreshadowing his destiny to become the father of an empress and the grandfather of an emperor.<sup>83</sup>

That Raymond serves as a foil to enhance imperial prestige is also suggested by Kinnamos's allegation that Πετούη—Poitou in west-central France—is to be situated "around the Ionian Gulf" (περὶ κόλπον τὸν Ἰόνιον).<sup>84</sup> This statement could have been corrected during a revision, but the geographical position of Poitou was of less concern than the reflection of Raymond on the imperial family.

An armed conflict with Raymond early in Manouel I's reign was opportune for Kinnamos to mention since Manouel's victory was one of his first major successes as emperor. The prince had revolted against a previous agreement (in 1138) that he would continue to rule the city, but in Ioannes II's name.<sup>85</sup> Choniates confirms that the prince agreed to the status of a client ruler (*lizios*),<sup>86</sup> this along with the "count of Tripolis" (Τριπόλεως κόμης), a reference to Count Raymond II of Tripolis (1137–52), whose father Pons had earlier rendered homage to Emperor Alexios. Curiously, Choniates gives a harmonious impression of relations between Ioannes II and the lords of the crusader polities, perhaps due to his source material and distance of sixty years from the events. However, the presentation may reflect his tendency to portray Ioannes's reign as a happier time.<sup>87</sup>

Michael Italikos, in an encomium to Ioannes II (1138), also alludes to the count of Tripolis and mentions that the count of Edessa became the emperor's client. It is credible that both counts rendered homage to Ioannes, like Raymond had done. Italikos's allegation that the king of Jerusalem also recognized the *basileus* as overlord forms part of his glorification of Ioannes's accomplishments.<sup>88</sup>

82 See also Ch. 3, pp. 161–162.

83 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 16(21)–17(10).

84 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 16(22).

85 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 17(10)–19(8).

86 See NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 59, n. 132 (p. 512); also Ch. 1, p. 70.

87 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 27(2–9). See Lilie (1993b), pp. 123–124; Vučetić (2016), pp. 80–81, 86; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (2017), p. 59, n. 133 (p. 512).

88 MICHAEL ITALIKOS, *Works*, no. 43, pp. 260(17)–261(3). See Lilie (1993b), pp. 124–125. THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 11, p. 258(166–168), also celebrates

Both Kinnamos and Choniates omit mention of a lack of support that Raymond and Joscelin of Edessa demonstrated during the siege of Shaizar according to William of Tyre. Choniates indicates that the siege failed because Ioannes retreated toward Edessa, in danger of being conquered by Muslims. Lilie convincingly links this statement with the historian's narrative of decline and his corresponding attempt to portray Ioannes as an emperor surpassing all of his successors.<sup>89</sup> In any case, the hypothesis, based on William of Tyre, that Raymond was categorically opposed to Byzantine influence or overlordship is of questionable historicity.<sup>90</sup> Kinnamos, like Michael Italikos, portrays the siege of Shaizar as a success in that the city's defenders offered tribute and—notably—a precious cross that had been taken from Romanos IV after the battle of Manzikert (1071). The gesture of handing over this object to Ioannes validated Ioannes's role as Christian emperor and protector of the ecumene.<sup>91</sup>

The medium of the cross played an important role in the representation of imperial ideology under Ioannes II and it was employed in finding an understanding with the crusader polities: the emperor was represented as the leader of all Christians and all those bearing the cross and fighting the infidels. Ioannes's triumphal entries into Antioch also put this approach on display.<sup>92</sup> While Ioannes built on pre-existing elements of imperial ideology, some elements were newly calibrated and adapted to reinforce the assertion of Byzantine overlordship and to facilitate the acceptance of this overlordship by the crusader polities.<sup>93</sup>

Concerning the second reception of the *basileus* in Antioch in 1138, Choniates omits any mention of the uprising against the Byzantines in the city which followed, possibly because his sources—likely panegyric—were silent on the matter. Kinnamos does allude to it, but like Choniates he omitted anything that would tarnish the memory of Ioannes II.<sup>94</sup> There are indications

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Ioannes's submission of Antioch and Tripolis. See also *ibid.*, no. 12, p. 262(33–36). As shown in the next two sections, Amalric, Baldwin IV, and perhaps Baldwin III appear to have formally accepted Byzantine overlordship at some point.

89 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 29(48)–30(90). See Lilie (1993b), p. 126–128.

90 See below.

91 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 20(9–15); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 30(90)–31(7); MICHAEL ITALIKOS, *Works*, no. 43, pp. 264(9)–265(10); NIKEPHOROS BASILAKES, *Encomia*, pp. 114(730)–116(772)=NIKEPHOROS BASILAKES, *Works*, pp. 67(14)–68(14). See Zorzi (2012), pp. 63–64; Harris (2014), p. 90.

92 Papageorgiou (2016), pp. 43–46.

93 Papageorgiou (2017), ch. 9.

94 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 29(17)–30(21): Manouel accusing the Antiochenes of having deprived Ioannes of the city and transgressing agreements; NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 31(16–20). In MICHAEL ITALIKOS, *Works*, no. 43, pp. 265(18)–266(29), there is no trace of the uprising either. See Lamma (1968), pp. 362–363; Lilie (1993b), pp. 128–130.

that the Antiochenes were not categorically opposed to Byzantine overlordship under certain conditions but that Ioannes II saw advantages in subverting the agreement of 1137. Encomiastic sources naturally suggest otherwise with praise for the utter defeat of opponents of imperial might and emphasis on the righteousness and virtues of the *basileus*.<sup>95</sup>

Plausibly because of the said kinship, Kinnamos does not censure Raymond's overt rebellion in 1142.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, Komnenian emperors, with the exception of Andronikos, would treat defeated rebellious aristocrats leniently, often establishing new arrangements with them. Choniates suggests that the restoration of Byzantine rule in Antioch was the main goal of the expedition of 1142. As in 1137/38, Ioannes was inclined to oust the prince of Antioch. Kinnamos mentions in passing that Ioannes intended to establish a new Byzantine lordship under his youngest son Manouel which would include Antioch in addition to Cilicia, Cyprus, and Attaleia. Choniates affirms that Ioannes intended to visit the Holy Sepulcher and endow it with gifts—a reference to the emperor's role as guardian of the Holy Places and overlord of the crusader polities.<sup>97</sup> While the Latins were not willing to accept the loss of Antioch without ample compensation, Ioannes was intent on avoiding a war against Christians (μετὰ Χριστιανῶν πόλεμος), yet he had the outskirts of the city plundered. Ioannes is said to have tried everything to persuade the Latins to hand over the city because he knew “the Latin stupidity and their insubordinate arrogance” (ἡ Λατινική κόρυζα καὶ τὸ τοῦ φρονήματος αὐτῶν ἀταπείνωτον). This description is derived from topical imperial panegyric.<sup>98</sup>

After relating the circumstances of Ioannes's death, Kinnamos, omitting Raymond's name, attributes a speech addressed to the envoys of the Antiochenes (Ἀντιοχεῖς) to Manouel. The speech reaffirms the rightful Byzantine claim to Antioch against allegations of the envoys, whom he reminds that they previously recognized the rights of the Byzantine emperors.<sup>99</sup>

Kinnamos shows considerable restraint in describing the conflict with Raymond, being the father of Empress Maria-Xene. Raymond is called a traitor for having committed a sin (ἁμαρτάς), but is not derided with negative epithets. Kinnamos relates that Raymond, after his defeat by Manouel's troops, atoned for his actions against Ioannes—and Manouel—at the emperor's

95 Buck (2017), ch. 6.

96 See below and IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 22(22)–23(3).

97 For the similar representation of Manouel, see section 5 of this chapter. Magdalino (2005), p. 50; Zorzi (2012), p. 73, observe that there is also an eschatological aspect.

98 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 38(20)–40(60).

99 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 29(17)–30(21).



tomb when he visited Constantinople in 1145. Thereafter he was pardoned by the ruler, becoming his subordinate and liegeman (*lizios*).<sup>100</sup> Even in the war against Manouel, Raymond is portrayed as courageous and an energetic warrior. Kinnamos even mentions that the prince “was not careless” (οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ ἡμέλει) in his conduct of military operations, even if his forces were inferior to those of the Byzantines.<sup>101</sup>

Kinnamos’s description, colored by hindsight, should be considered alongside a poem by Manganeios from Raymond’s lifetime: this comparison illustrates how the image of Latins is subjected to context. Although the prince had accepted imperial overlordship, Manganeios nevertheless mocks him in order to exemplify what happens to those who defy their imperial master: the ruler of Antioch, once a “dragon” (δράκων) has become a puppy (κυνάριον) at the emperor’s feet. The polemical context of the Second Crusade is, of course, to be taken into account.<sup>102</sup> Michael Italikos, in his encomium of 1138, refers to the submission of the prince of Antioch and makes unflattering remarks on the false confidence of the “Antiochenes, the Kelts of Syria,” which collapses once the emperor’s army approaches.<sup>103</sup>

100 Lillie (2004), pp. 81–82; Harris (2014), p. 101. See also above for this term.

101 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 33(16)–35(23). See also Ch. 3, pp. 161–162. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 52(23–30), probably less interested in celebrating this accomplishment at any rate, does not refer to Raymond’s journey to Constantinople, possibly because it did not figure in the sources he used, and limits himself to mentioning that Manouel successfully dealt with Raymond’s attack on the Byzantine cities in Cilicia. See Zorzi (2012), p. 96.

102 Jeffreys and Jeffreys (2001), p. 109.

103 This portrayal of Raymond and the Antiochenes can be contrasted with that of the defeated Armenian prince Leon as a tyrant characterized by hubris and rashness, who, instead of being integrated into the imperial hierarchy, was taken prisoner and died in Constantinople not long after Michael composed his encomium. See MICHAEL ITALIKOS, *Works*, no. 43; Lamma (1968), pp. 343–344. Manganeios, in relation to Manouel’s triumph in Antioch in 1159, is similar in tone, on which see Anca (2010), p. 41. NIKEPHOROS BASILAKES, *Works*, p. 63(24–28)=NIKEPHOROS BASILAKES, *Encomia*, p. 109(585–590), has rather unflattering words for Raymond in his encomium to Ioannes II, stating that “that which is harsh in his judgement was quickly softened” (ταχὺ τὸ τραχὺ τῆς γνώμης μαλάσσεται). Basilakes’s conclusion, however, is that the ruler of Antioch—after “he bent his neck” (τὸν ἀχένα κάμπτεται)—became an “ally” (ξύμμαχος). A little later in his account (*Works*, p. 65(8–12), see *Encomia*, p. 111(643–648), but Garzya’s edition is to be preferred here), he also praises Ioannes for subduing the count of Edessa (“Ἐδεσσα in Garzya’s edition, but Σάεσσα in Maisano’s), i.e., Joscelin, recalling the capture of Edessa by the emperor Lucius Verus (Λεύκιος) in 165 AD, which was followed by the elevation of a Roman client king, and comparing the emperor and Joscelin to Alexander the Great and Poros, who, after his defeat against the Macedonian king, was reinstated as Alexander’s satrap.

The principality of Antioch reappears when Kinnamos addresses Thoros's rebellion in Cilicia, a region of interest to both the principality and Romania. Accordingly, Antioch and Cilicia are often addressed together in Byzantine source material. When Andronikos, the future emperor, was sent to Cilicia to counteract Thoros, he was accompanied by the *kaisar* Ioannes Dalassenos Rogerios, whose mission was to ask for Constance of Antioch's hand in marriage, Raymond having died in the meantime.<sup>104</sup> Constance's rejection is not only explained by Ioannes's age or appearance:

[After Raymond's death], forthwith his wife Konstantza offered herself and the Antiochenes' property to the emperor, but when as aforesaid, the emperor sent the *kaisar* [Ioannes] Rogerios to wed her, she changed her mind by common consent of the Antiochenes and joined in marriage with a certain Renaldos [Raynald of Châtillon], since they [the Antiochenes] were anxious lest when the woman was wedded to Rogerios they should become subject to payment of tax to the Romans.<sup>105</sup>

Kinnamos shifts the blame for this failure onto the Antiochenes. As they had during marriage negotiations under Ioannes II in the 1130s, the Antiochene nobles, while remaining interested in some form of Byzantine overlordship and therefore support, were probably wary of a detrimental disruption of power structures. However, they may have been displeased by Byzantine offers, particularly in military respects, while Raynald of Châtillon promised to be an energetic leader and was reputed for military prowess.<sup>106</sup>

The description of Raymond's death further honors his memory and the imperial family. Congruent with the aristocratic military ideal under the Komnenoi, he is referred to as "more resolute than anyone else in martial affairs." Willing to take a risk that he knew to be great which a comrade had challenged him to, he died a noble death overwhelmed by the Turks. There is no mention of foolhardiness, a characteristic often ascribed to Latins, but Raymond's behavior rather appears as an example of aristocratic prowess, the

104 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 121(18)–122(3). See also Ch. 7, pp. 230–231.

105 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 178(11–17): "ἐν μὲν τῷ παραυτίκα Κωνσταντζα ἡ αὐτοῦ γαμετὴ ἑαυτὴν τε βασιλεῖ καὶ τὰ Ἀντιοχέων ἐχείριζε πράγματα, βασιλέως δ' ἔπειτα Ῥογέριον τὸν καίσαρα, ὡσπερ ἤδη ἐμνήσθην, ἐφ' ᾧ ξυνοικῆσαι αὐτῇ στεῖλαιαντος, μεταβαλοῦσα ἐκεῖνη κοινῇ τῶν Ἀντιοχέων βουλῇ Ῥενάλδῳ τινὶ γάμου κοινωνεῖ, ἐνοησάντων μὴ ποτε Ῥογερῖῳ γεγαμημένης τῆς γυναικὸς Ῥωμαίοις ἐς φόρου ἀπαγωγῆν αὐτοὶ πέσωσιν." See also Lilie (1993b), pp. 165–166; Magdalino (1993b), p. 66.

106 Buck (2017), pp. 77–80, 84–85, 201.

description indicating that the prince's death was worthy of great praise.<sup>107</sup> He is also “a man akin to those who are like Herakles”—a figure the emperor is frequently compared to in panegyric.<sup>108</sup> This heroic figure therefore represented a model to emulate for military aristocrats and emperors, especially the young Alexios II.<sup>109</sup>

This praise, reflecting Byzantine (aristocratic) appreciation of skills in warfare and male beauty, is confirmed by Western accounts which tell of Raymond's reputation. Such praise is also found in Choniates's *Historia*, even if the later historian had less reason to flatter the prince's memory: “Petebinos was an Italian [Latin] by birth, a steadfast horseman, dexterous with a lance more than the famous Priamos.” In contrast with his earlier mention of Raymond, Choniates refers to him as Πετεβίνος, a Greek form of Poitiers (*Pictavium* in Latin), perhaps due to the use of a different source.<sup>110</sup>

**4.2** *Different Perspectives on Renaldos (Raynald) and Rituals in Antioch*  
Raynald of Châtillon (ca. 1125–87), prince of Antioch (1153–60) and later lord of Oultrejourdain (1175–87),<sup>111</sup> mainly plays the role of a rebel against imperial order, eventually brought into line by the emperor, like the Armenian prince Thoros, in Kinnamos's history. This reflects the historiographer's introspective interests.<sup>112</sup> Choniates's account of this figure, on the other hand, is entirely one of disinterest, apart from an acknowledgement that Raynald played a minor role in imperial history. Kinnamos's approach is congruent with his

107 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 122(4)–123(9); see p. 122(7–8): “ἔτοιμότατος εἶπερ τις εἰς τὰ πολέμια [...] πράγματα.” Manouel's extreme boldness against a big Saracen force, encountered when hunting in Syria (1159), is comparable to Raymond's, for instance. Presumably to emphasize Manouel's prowess even more, Kinnamos mentions that his companions, but not the emperor, were “in great anxiety” (ὀκνήσει πολλῇ, see p. 189[2–21]). Other examples of Manouel's prowess are given on pp. 193(1)–194(5). For William of Tyre's interesting censure of Raymond's vices, see below, n. 110.

108 See e.g., THEODOROS PRODROMOS, *Historical Poems*, no. 16, p. 279(73–84), see also Kazhdan (1991), vol. 2, pp. 917–918.

109 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 125(18–19): “ἄνῆρ κατὰ τοὺς θρουλλουμένους Ἡρακλεῖς.”

110 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 115(57)–116(59): “ἦν δὲ ὁ Πετεβίνος οὗτος Ἰταλιώτης μὲν τὸ γένος, ἱππότης δ' ἀκράδαντος καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸν Πριάμον ἐκείνον εὐμέλιος.” See Zorzi (2012), p. 183. It is also noteworthy that WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 14.21, while praising Raymond in a similar fashion as charming, tall, elegant, and handsome, does criticize him for being headstrong, irascible, and unreasonable with too great a passion for gambling. In Kinnamos and Choniates, only the flattering attributes are to be found.

111 For an overview of Raynald's life in general, see Aubé (2007), which has been critically reviewed, however.

112 See Ch. 1, pp. 33–35, for the pervasively introspective and generic character of Byzantine literature.

more detailed coverage of events concerning the Holy Land, as he composed his history under the Komnenoi and celebrates what he could portray as Komnenian successes.

Πενάλδος was greedy for money according to Kinnamos and therefore attacked Byzantine Cyprus in the fashion of a pirate (πειρατικῶς), capturing the Byzantine commanders there. Manganeios also has Raynald himself condemn this as piracy in his submission to the emperor.<sup>113</sup> Characteristically, Kinnamos places the blame on the commanders, implying that the emperor could not be held responsible for the sack. The story of Raynald's mistreatment of the patriarch of Antioch<sup>114</sup> serves to contrast the prince's cruelty with the emperor's magnanimity. Rejecting an offer from the patriarch, who, despite Raynald's offer to placate him, was intent on vengeance, Manouel is said to have preferred a noble victory over Raynald to treachery. Kinnamos strongly implies that the emperor did not recognize the title of patriarch adopted by the bishop with the consent of his fellow Latins, alluding to the contentious issue of the selection of the rightful patriarch between the papacy and Byzantium.<sup>115</sup>

As is frequently the case in Byzantine literature and particularly imperial panegyric, references to topical attributes of the Latins and their prince do not necessarily reflect attitudes of their Byzantine contemporaries, but rather serve to cultivate the image of the emperor—the more insolent the defeated adversary, the greater the feat of reducing him to servitude.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, Raynald was plausibly much more negatively perceived due to his actions than other Latins. While the sack of Cyprus strained relations with Antioch, Raynald, like his predecessor Raymond, was not opposed to cooperation with Byzantium or overlordship in principle and the sack appears to have enjoyed little support from Antiochene nobles.<sup>117</sup>

Once the emperor and his army arrived, Raynald had no choice but to admit defeat, which allowed encomiasts to praise the emperor's pity among other virtues.<sup>118</sup>

113 MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, Poems of 1158/59, no. 9, p. 72(128). The cruelty and severity of the sack is addressed by other sources as well, on which see Anca (2010), pp. 150–154.

114 For their conflict, see Buck (2017), pp. 103–105.

115 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 178(3)–182(11). See Todt (1998), esp. ch. 8.

116 See MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, Poems of 1158/59, esp. nos. 35, 10.

117 Buck (2017), pp. 201–202.

118 According to Buck (2017), pp. 202–208, the penance ritual in Mamistra was not traditionally Byzantine, but something novel: a Latin ritual of supplicatory penance which was then brought into harmony with imperial ideology by encomiasts. Raynald seized the initiative with this political move and thus avoided a Byzantine military retaliation for the sack of Cyprus, which the large Byzantine army could easily have inflicted.

The common Christian religion favored the penance ritual, which plays a prominent role in Manganeios's portrayal of the emperor's triumphal entry into Antioch.<sup>119</sup> Kinnamos provides an account of Raynald's atonement in Mopsuestia/Mamistra and Manouel's subsequent triumph and stay in Antioch, celebrating Byzantine superiority and overlordship over the crusader polities but also reflecting Byzantium's major strategic and ideological interest in Antioch. Accompanied by a group in monastic clothing, Raynald walked unshod through the city and thus approached the emperor. Manouel had them beg for mercy but finally allowed the prince to enter his tent, which stands for the imperial dignity and palace as well as heavenly order.<sup>120</sup> Raynald had to agree by oath to numerous demands, including the provision that "according to old custom" the patriarch of Antioch would henceforth be designated from Constantinople, an important marker of Byzantium's standing and prestige in the crusader polities. This impressed the envoys of Muslim, Armenian, and Palestinian rulers (i.e., of the crusader polities). Raynald also swore to provide a contingent for the emperor's wars. As this stipulation, in addition to the Byzantine right to name the patriarch, displeased the Latins of Antioch, the emperor wisely and generously allowed a smaller contingent. The Antiochenes attempted to prevent Manouel from entering the city by means of a ruse. This is also an allusion to the reluctance of the Latin lords of the principality to accept imperial overlordship in Kinnamos's narrative. Manouel, undeterred, entered the city triumphantly, however. Raynald and others accompanied the imperial horse on foot, which according to Anca was both a disciplinary measure and an honorary service.<sup>121</sup> Kinnamos's account of the triumph celebrates once more the emperor's bodily strength; he is described as elegantly dismounting at the church of the apostle Peter, where he was received by the bishop and the entire order of priests. Thus Kinnamos, like Manganeios, celebrates the magnitude of the imperial triumph and the extent of Antiochene servility (*δουλοπρέπεια*).<sup>122</sup>

In the context of Manouel's triumphal entry into Antioch, Manganeios mitigates his frequent negative *topoi* regarding the arrogance of the Latins of the Holy Land and Antioch in particular, with virtues that are often attributed to Latins in other Greek sources, namely noble birth, ideals of beauty, and military prowess, also meant to reflect positively on the emperor. He is received by well-armed warriors (*μαχηταί δορυφόρονες*) and the chief citizens, who are wealthy, of

119 MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems of 1158/59*, nos. 9, 10.

120 Anca (2010), pp. 68–71.

121 Anca (2010), esp. pp. 42–46.

122 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 182(11)–188(8).

noble birth (λαμπρόν ἐν γένει), wear splendid clothing, and cultivate luxury and refinement. The more noble and illustrious among the ladies (περιφανέστεραι καὶ τῶν εὐγενεστέρων) are devoted to beauty (ἐς κάλλος ἡσκημένοι).<sup>123</sup>

Manouel later called the promised troops of Prince Raynald and other client rulers to war against the Turks, in which the prince was defeated and captured by Nur-ad-Din along with Joscelin of Edessa and the ruler of Tripolis—Kinnamos puts the blame on the *doux* of Cilicia, Konstantinos Kalamanos, and exculpates the emperor. Kinnamos confuses Raynald with Bohemond III, due to a lack of revision or interest.<sup>124</sup> Both were eventually ransomed by Manouel, another demonstration of dependence on Byzantium and, from an imperial standpoint, certainly of the *basileus's* superior status as overlord of the Holy Land.<sup>125</sup> Adopting his habitual imperial standpoint, Kinnamos denounces the Antiochenes as “oath-breakers by nature” (φύσει ψεύδορκοι), since rather than turn to Manouel after Raynald’s capture they instead resorted to King Baldwin of Jerusalem.<sup>126</sup>

Like Ioannes II’s victory over Antioch in 1137, Raynald’s submission of 1159 marked a major Byzantine success, in terms of (restoration of) prestige. It also demonstrated the degree to which the crusader polities depended on the support that Romania could provide or withhold. From that perspective, these successes were more than imperial pretense.<sup>127</sup> Even if the prince of Antioch was featured during the ritual, the collective repentance and submission of the Antiochenes was emphasized.<sup>128</sup> The account of the emperor’s expedition to Cilicia and Syria thus gives the impression of a major imperial victory, while in terms of realpolitik it was of less consequence.

Choniates was probably disinterested in the expedition; he employs an encomiastic source flattering Manouel. This appears consistent with the historian’s affirmation that this emperor was a better ruler in his earlier years, an assessment relating to the *Historia’s* narrative of decline. The Antiochenes are also presented as displeased by the emperor’s approach, but forced to submit, receiving the emperor before the doors of the city in a “slavish attitude and

123 MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems of 1158/59*, no. 10, pp. 128(19–33), 134(143–159).

124 Another expression of genericism: see Ch. 1, pp. 33–35.

125 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 199(6–8), 215(14)–216(17). See IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, trans. Brand, p. 164, n. 19 (pp. 252–253); Lilie (1993b), pp. 190–191; Goridis (2015), pp. 321–325.

126 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 237(7–18).

127 Anca (2010), pp. 40–41.

128 MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems of 1158/59*, nos. 9, 10, 35; Anca (2010), pp. 154–157.

spirit” (μετὰ δουλικού σχήματος καὶ φρονήματος), prepared for a glorious reception. The emperor thus humbled even the pride of proud “Italian” knights.

Noting the Latin reputation for skillfully fighting with lance and horse, Choniates has Manouel participate in a tournament, enriched by epic elements. “Prince Geraldos” (πρίγκιψ Γεράλδος),<sup>129</sup> introduced abruptly at this point, is said to have participated as well: with splendid gear and a horse whiter than snow, he and his knights were magnificent to behold. Having impressed the Latin knights, Manouel departed for Constantinople.<sup>130</sup>

Choniates’s concern appears to have been the expected delight of his audience in the linguistically refined description of the event rather than the occurrences themselves, although he evidences Manouel’s policy of incorporating suitable, compatible Western elements in imperial representation and rituals.<sup>131</sup> Kinnamos, in contrast, was more interested in stressing the emperor’s glorious achievements regarding the crusader polities, as per his description of Manouel’s dealings with Hungary, for example.

## 5 The Imperial Protectorate on Display in the Holy Land

From the outset, Manouel Komnenos intended to make the crusader polities in Syria and Palestine accept Byzantine overlordship and to assert the Byzantine emperor’s traditional role as protector of the Holy Places. In this role, he acted as patron in the Holy Land, representing his protectorate and status.<sup>132</sup> This role also had an eschatological dimension in that the Komnenoi from Alexios I were associated with prophetic narratives of the last, messianic emperor laying down his crown in Jerusalem, thus competing with similar rivaling claims of Western monarchs.<sup>133</sup> The capture of Jerusalem in 1099 introduced another source of rivalry as it posed a challenge to the symbolic status of Constantinople as the New Jerusalem. This is reflected in Byzantine representations that emphasize Constantinople’s status as a sacred place and the New Jerusalem.

129 The different variations of Raynald’s name (Renaldos, Geraldos, Gerardos, Gelardos, etc.) may also be suggestive of the generic trend described in Ch. 1, pp. 33–35, and might indicate a lack of interest. See Zorzi (2012), p. 174.

130 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 108(86)–110(19).

131 Schreiner (1996); Maguire and Jones (2002); Zorzi (2012), pp. 173–174; Lilie (2014), pp. 189–190.

132 Magdalino (1993b), esp. pp. 66–76; Lilie (1993b), esp. pp. 165–221; Harris (2014), esp. pp. 112–120. This policy also influenced his favorable portrayal in Western sources, see Neocleous (2019), pp. 55–57, 89–93.

133 Magdalino (2007b), p. 52.

Another response appears to have been an emphasis on the importance of the heavenly rather than the earthly Jerusalem.<sup>134</sup> The mosaics in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the decoration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem are examples of Manouel's patronage. A description (ekphrasis) of the Holy Land dated to 1177, attributed to the Great Hetaerarch Ioannes Doukas, devotes little attention to Latins but reflects this same policy with regard to the crusader polities.<sup>135</sup> King Baldwin III of Jerusalem (1143–63), identified by Kinnamos and Manganeios as the senior ruler of the Holy Land, was honored by his kinship with the emperor and played a role in this policy, if not a major one, given that his marriage alliance with the imperial dynasty (1158–63) resulted in no offspring and lasted only a few years. Accordingly, the historiographers do not say much about him and display the generic tendency that usually applies to Latins and other non-Byzantines.<sup>136</sup>

Baldwin, “the king of Palestine” (Παλαιστίνης ῥήξ), is introduced in Kinnamos's encomiastically oriented account of Manouel's expedition to Cilicia and Syria (1158–59). Baldwin hoped to profit from the emperor's victory over Raynald, prince of Antioch, by the principality being placed under his authority. He “deceitfully” (ἐπίτηδες) attempted to convince the “Antiochenes” that they “were obliged to him for great favors” (χαρίτων αὐτῷ μεγάλων ὀφειλέται τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες). Perceiving Baldwin's intentions, Manouel at first refused to grant his request to meet. After daily pleas from the king, Manouel finally agreed to receive him. When leaving the city for the imperial camp, Baldwin was “allegedly” (λέγεται) surrounded by Antiochenes hoping that he would intercede with the *basileus* on their behalf. Baldwin behaved arrogantly and affronted Manouel by dismounting where the emperor usually did.<sup>137</sup>

However, if this behavior was a strategy to intimidate the emperor rather than the result of ignorance, it did not work.<sup>138</sup> Manouel reacted mildly, welcoming the king “in a fashion worthy of the throne of David” (ἄξιως τοῦ Δαβὶδ θρόνου), although as a reaction to Baldwin's offense he did withhold customary honors. Instead of rebuking the man, the *basileus* embarrassed him by demonstrating his magnanimity and superiority. Baldwin was symbolically put in his place as he was offered a low seat which denoted his inferior rank.<sup>139</sup> Rather

134 Eshel (2018), pp. 150–151.

135 See, inter alia: Jotischky (1994); Külzer (2003); Ciggaar (2008); Messis (2011b).

136 For this generic and introspective tendency, see Ch. 1, esp. pp. 33–35.

137 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 183(14)–184(13), 185(7–16).

138 Anca (2010), p. 120.

139 Anca (2010), p. 68, notes that this detail is confirmed by William of Tyre. Another pointer is an Armenian source that records that Manouel presented Baldwin with a crown (*ibid.*, p. 103).



than gaining rights over Antioch, Baldwin merely obtained a reduction in the size of the military contingent the principality had to provide for Manouel's army. His envoys had thrown themselves at the *basileus's* feet, gladly accepting that the Byzantine patriarch of Antioch would reside and be accepted in his see.<sup>140</sup>

The reference to the throne of King David does indicate, however, that the king of Jerusalem was recognized as the senior ruler in the Holy Land. King David played an important role in Byzantine imperial ideology. Baldwin's integration into the imperial hierarchy allowed the reference to David to reflect positively on the *basileus*: a client king would hold the throne of David in the emperor's name. Baldwin thus played a role in asserting recognition of the emperor's traditional role as guardian of the Holy Places.<sup>141</sup>

As observed by Lilie, Kinnamos likely exaggerates Baldwin's offense to stress Manouel's magnanimity and superior intellect. Kinnamos also overstates the king's ambitions regarding Antioch. A serious play to strengthen royal authority over the principality would have involved negotiations preceding the imperial expedition.<sup>142</sup> Recent research suggests that the influence of the kings of Jerusalem over the principality of Antioch was more limited than previously claimed.<sup>143</sup>

During the triumphal procession celebrated in Antioch, Baldwin had to ride far behind the emperor, and without insignia, while Raynald and other nobles acted as *stratores*. Lilie observes that the description of the procession by Kinnamos resembles proceedings at an enfeoffment. Thus while Baldwin, in contrast to other Latin princes, did have the privilege to ride, it was made apparent that he ranked below the emperor. It can be concluded that the triumph discreetly implied Baldwin to be an imperial subject, albeit of an exalted status. Baldwin had sworn an oath to Manouel, although Kinnamos does not specify what the oath entailed.<sup>144</sup> Manouel relegated the king, along with the

140 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 185(7)–186(10). See Magdalino (1993b), p. 74.

141 Harris (2014), p. 115. See also MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems of 1158/59*, no. 10, p. 136(183–196), describing how Manouel allowed Baldwin, termed recent inheritor of the throne of David, to share in his triumph at Antioch. There is also a reference to the honor of Baldwin's kinship with the emperor established by his marriage to Manouel's niece, elevating the king's rank.

142 Lilie (1993b), p. 178; Magdalino (1993b), p. 69.

143 Buck (2017), pp. 200, 206–208.

144 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 238(4–6); Lilie (1993b), p. 181 and n. 160; Anca (2010), pp. 42–49. See also Magdalino (1993b), p. 74: "Vague and ambiguous as the evidence is, it does suggest that the kings of Jerusalem [i.e., Baldwin III, Amalric I, Baldwin IV] were accepting the formality of a federate, satellite status that bordered on vassalage, at least

prince, even further by settling legal disputes during his stay of eight days. If Kinnamos is to be believed, the emperor impressed the Latins of Antioch to such a degree that they asked that only Byzantines judge their cases in lieu of their own people (ὁμογενεῖς).<sup>145</sup>

Baldwin is said to have admired Manouel, especially his proficiency as a hunter and jouster. Attempting to best him in these skills, Baldwin slipped from his horse and injured his arm. As the *basileus* had great medical experience, he bound the king's arm, applied the appropriate care, and removed the bandage after a few days. To be healed by the emperor was an honor usually accorded only to imperial relatives, a criterion that applied to Manouel's kinsman Baldwin. More than an act of imperial philanthropy or a token of the emperor's favor, this was another ritual, albeit rendered by circumstances, that allowed the Byzantine ruler to demonstrate his superiority.<sup>146</sup>

Kinnamos suggests that from the time of his expedition to Cilicia and Syria, Manouel regarded Baldwin as his willing subordinate. Even if Baldwin was not compelled to render homage, he agreed to provide troops for the Byzantines, as had Raynald of Antioch. In 1160, Ioannes Kontostephanos traveled to Palestine on the emperor's behalf and asked the king to furnish the promised troops against the sultan of Ikonion.<sup>147</sup> From a Byzantine perspective, and from that of some Latins, Baldwin was a Byzantine client king.<sup>148</sup> Choniates refers to the king only once when he explains that Andronikos's mistress and Manouel's niece, Theodora, was Baldwin's widow.<sup>149</sup> Recognition of Byzantine overlordship was involved in the marriage negotiations, given the kingdom of

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in Byzantine eyes. In this, the alliance with Baldwin set a precedent for the relationships that Manuel tried to form with all his royal neighbors in the following decade."

- 145 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 186(17)–188(8). Lilie (1993b), p. 181 and n. 161, finds this somewhat improbable, but not impossible. However, given that Manouel's army was larger than any army that the crusader polities were able to raise, the Antiochenes were perhaps as impressed as Kinnamos claims. It was probably also an opportunity for all those who, before Manouel's victory, had not been able to obtain a favorable verdict. In addition, their ruler, Raynald, had been humiliated and had recognized Manouel as his overlord (see pp. 426–427). The triumphal procession confirmed this situation. No one was in a position to resist the *basileus* for the moment.
- 146 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 190(2–18). See Magdalino (1993b), pp. 362–363; Anca (2010), pp. 112–126. Manouel also took personal medical care of his father-in-law Conrad III, on which see Ch. 11, p. 331.
- 147 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 199(2–5).
- 148 See Lilie (1993b), pp. 183–184, also noting that, following Manouel's expedition, the empire was in the most favorable political situation since the accession of Emperor Alexios I.
- 149 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 237(7–9), 250(11–15); NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 141(89–93).

Jerusalem's need for Romania's support. Kinnamos and Choniates lacked interest in the marriage most likely because it remained childless and ended after a few years with Baldwin's death. It certainly did not produce the lasting effects that the marriage alliance with Antioch concluded in 1161 would have.<sup>150</sup>

A contemporary source, Manganeios Prodromos, describes the king of Jerusalem as an intermediary between the emperor and the Armenian prince Thoros who was hoping to obtain a pardon for the hostile actions he had taken against the empire. While Thoros was of too low a rank to approach the emperor directly, Baldwin acted as mediator because of his proximity to and kinship with the ruler. The poem is another indication that the alliance with Baldwin was part of Manouel's policy of strengthening Byzantine influence and authority in the region.<sup>151</sup> Baldwin was involved in negotiations that led to Manouel's marriage to Maria of Antioch. Greek sources are silent on the matter, possibly because the union was opposed by Baldwin, who recommended Melisende of Tripolis, and by Prince Raynald of Châtillon, who was no longer in a position to resist after becoming the captive of Nur ad-Din in November 1160. Raynald's capture promised to reinforce Antiochene dependence on Byzantine support and made the alliance more attractive. Once Maria became Manouel's wife, he and his supporters had no interest in remembering the disagreements that had accompanied the negotiations.<sup>152</sup>

## 6 Amerrigos (Amalric of Jerusalem) as a Foil

Under Baldwin's successor and brother Amalric (1163–74), the Byzantine influence in Outremer appears to have culminated, which is also reflected to a degree in Byzantine literature.<sup>153</sup> When first speaking of Amalric, referred to only as “the king of Palestine,” Kinnamos reports that the new king requested from the emperor in Constantinople a Byzantine bride on his accession. As with Baldwin, the status of Antioch is again a central issue. The Antiochenes

150 Lilie (1993b), pp. 175–176.

151 Magdalino (1993b), p. 70; MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, *Poems of 1158/59*, no. 8, pp. 122(694)–124(727).

152 See Magdalino (1993b), p. 72; Lilie (1993b), pp. 184–185, referring to other sources which relate that Count Raymond of Tripolis, in behavior similar to that of Raynald of Châtillon before him, even attacked coastal regions under Byzantine authority in order to take revenge for Melisende's rejection. See KONSTANTINOS MANASSES, *Ἄδεια πορικόν*, pp. 210(44)–212(68), confirmed by WILLIAM OF TYRE, *Hist.* 18.33.

153 There appears to be agreement in the scholarship on this point. See the studies cited previously, esp. n. 132.

managed their own affairs after the death of Baldwin III, who had acted as a guardian while Prince Raynald was held captive by Nur ad-Din. Amalric, like Baldwin, was intent on extending his authority over the principality—both had limited success.<sup>154</sup> Kinnamos appreciates the political situation after Bohemond III's capture and release with Manouel's help (1165) when he states that Amalric knew that the "city [Antioch] was subject to the emperor."<sup>155</sup>

That the king accepted the empire's rights over Antioch, at least on ascending the throne, is unlikely. However, he and the magnates of Jerusalem could not afford to dismiss the emperor's standpoint, at least by 1165. The Latin West had failed to supply the military support that the crusader polities required, support they had repeatedly requested against their Muslim neighbors. Therefore, Amalric could depend only on Byzantium for the defense of the crusader polities, especially in the north and against Nur ad-Din. Manouel, however, reasserted his overlordship of Antioch when he forced its prince, Raynald, to accept it in 1159, and again when the prince was captured and Princess Constance was ousted after King Baldwin's death.<sup>156</sup> Kinnamos covers up Amalric's hesitation concerning an alliance with Byzantium and the concessions it would entail, stressing instead the honor of becoming the emperor's kinsman and enjoying his protection, as does Eustathios in the Epiphany oration of 1176.<sup>157</sup>

Kinnamos likewise omits the failure of the Latins of Antioch to admit a Byzantine patriarch until 1165, when Bohemond III, after his release thanks to Manouel paying his ransom, was constrained to carry out the promise of his stepfather Raynald and his father Raymond before him. Presumably, he also rendered homage to the emperor. In 1170, the Byzantine patriarch Athanasios died in his own church during an earthquake, interpreted as divine judgment. The encomiastic Kinnamos, who must have known of the incident, omitted it, avoiding the shadow it would have cast. Choniates's silence may be based on him not consulting sources, or it is possible that he did not remember the incident when he composed the *Historia* thirty years later. Antioch was at the periphery of the empire during Manouel's reign and at the time Choniates was active as a historiographer, it was outside of the Byzantine sphere of interest.

154 Buck (2017), esp. ch. 7.

155 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 237(7–17); see p. 237(16–17): “ὡς βασιλεὶ κατήκοος ἡ πόλις αὕτη τυγχάνει οὐσα.” Although the content of the letter that Kinnamos professes to quote may reflect an official imperial document, Kresten (1997), pp. 39–44, has shown that Kinnamos certainly adapted the language of this and other supposedly inserted documents, also selecting and changing content in order to adapt it to his agenda.

156 Lilie (1993b), pp. 187–189, 191.

157 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 237(7)–238(6). For Eustathios's portrayal of Amalric, see below, pp. 437–438.

Otherwise, he might have included the event as a bad omen corresponding to his narrative of decline.<sup>158</sup>

Manouel disappointed Amalric in his hopes concerning Antioch and reaffirmed Romania's rights, but he indicated his approval of a marriage alliance and agreed to send "one of the daughters of the *prōtosebastos*" to Palestine to become the new queen of Jerusalem. Kinnamos perhaps expected his audience to know that the bride chosen was Maria, daughter of Ioannes Komnenos, the emperor's nephew. Amalric renewed the oath sworn to the emperor by his brother Baldwin. Magdalino considers that for the kingdom of Jerusalem, this oath, like Baldwin's, entailed recognition of a satellite status, "which bordered on vassalage, at least in Byzantine eyes."<sup>159</sup>

A major event involving Amalric, however, is the Byzantine-Latin expedition to conquer Egypt in 1169. Choniates and Kinnamos give differing accounts of the expedition, due to their respective agendas. The imperial encomiast Kinnamos remembers that Egypt once belonged to the "Romans' realm" (Ῥωμαίων ἀρχή). Manouel attempted to turn Egypt into a Byzantine satellite polity, similar to Antioch and Jerusalem—hence Kinnamos's reference to the "many regions in the east" (πολλὰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἑῴαν) that Manouel had "recovered for the Romans" (Ῥωμαίοις ἀνασωσάμενος). The probable intention was to control the coastal cities and their harbors with the help of both the Byzantine navy and Italian maritime powers, in exchange for lucrative privileges. When Kinnamos mentions the arrival of the Byzantine admiral Andronikos Kontostephanos in Egypt he refers to Amalric's involvement. From Egypt, Kontostephanos sent envoys to Palestine asking for the king to join him, "according to the terms of the agreement [between them]" (κατὰ τὰ ξυγκείμενα). This refers to the agreements reached in the negotiations concerning Amalric's marriage to Maria Komnene and the Egyptian campaign itself.<sup>160</sup> Kinnamos's statement that Kontostephanos landed in Egypt first is directly contradicted by Choniates, whose account is more extensive and detailed. As is the case with other comparisons between the two historians, different source material may have been

158 Lilie (1993b), pp. 190–191; Magdalino (1993b), pp. 72–73; Goridis (2015), p. 321; Buck (2017), pp. 105–106. As argued by Goridis (2015), p. 342, Manouel's ransoming of prisoners from the crusader polities helped the *basileus* to exert influence there, strengthening his authority and the dependence of the Latin rulers on Romania.

159 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., p. 238(2–6). See Lilie (1993b), pp. 192–193; Magdalino (1993b), p. 74; Zorzi (2012), p. 239. Interestingly, Amalric, then count of Jaffa and Ascalon, had apparently acted as the emperor's *strator* during the triumphal procession in Antioch in 1159. See MANGANEIOS PRODROMOS, Poems of 1158/59, no. 10, p. 136(197–203); Anca (2010), p. 46.

160 IOANNES KINNAMOS, Hist., pp. 278(6)–279(2).

used. In addition, Kinnamos's sources, plausibly panegyric, might have been vague concerning the specific progression of the campaign. Given his encomiastic tendency, this information was likely unimportant.<sup>161</sup>

Kinnamos—like Choniates—ascribes the initiative for the campaign to the Byzantines. Lilie has shown that this corresponds to the situation from 1167, by which time Amalric's advances in Egypt appeared favorable for a complete conquest without Byzantine support. In addition, Manouel's victory over Hungary, also in 1167, enabled the emperor to redirect military forces and resources. In August, a disease decimated the army of Frederick Barbarossa, Byzantium's adversary in Italy. Manouel and his advisers therefore saw great opportunities at a relatively low cost in an Egyptian campaign.<sup>162</sup>

Kinnamos blames the "Palestinians" for the subsequent failure of the campaign. While Amalric was delaying, Kontostephanos landed and took the city of *Τενέσιον* (Tanis), but when the forces of Jerusalem were approaching, the Byzantines "transferred the war to Tamiathon" (Damietta). It had been agreed that the Byzantines would receive half of the conquered land while the rest would go to the kingdom of Jerusalem ("Palestine"). However:

At the outset, the king, when the Romans reached Egypt first, treacherously decided to come late for the war, so that while the Romans ran all the risks he might effortlessly take possession of the country; because he was late, he continuously deferred battle and advised the like to the Romans, while they, paying little heed to his words, daily sustained heroic struggles. Whether [...] they did this desiring the Romans to run the risks [...] or were utterly envious of the emperor's lordship over Egypt as well, I am unable to state. Allegedly, however, those inside [Damietta] gradually corrupted the king with money and induced him to this [treachery].<sup>163</sup>

161 Lilie (1993b), pp. 200–201. For Choniates's account, see below, pp. 440–443.

162 Lilie (1993b), pp. 198–199; (2004), pp. 117–118. Negotiations concerning Egypt probably began with the marriage negotiations between Romania and Jerusalem (1165). See Lilie (1993b), pp. 309–310.

163 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 279(12)–280(1): "ὁ τοίνυν ῥήξ, ἐπειδὴ Ῥωμαῖοι προτερήσαντες ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἦλθον, ἐπιβούλως ἄγαν τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὑστερεῖν τοῦ πολέμου διανοεῖτο, ὅπως Ῥωμαίων διακινδυνεύσαντων τὴν χώραν αὐτὸς ἀκονιτὶ διακληρώσαιτο· ὡς δὲ παρῆν ὄψ' ἐκαὶ αὐτός, τὴν τε μάχην αἰεὶ ὑπερετίθετο καὶ Ῥωμαίοις δὲ ταῦτ' ἀξυμβουλευῶν ἦν, κὰν ἐκεῖνοι ὀλίγα τοῖς λεγομένοις προσέχοντες ἡρώικους εἰς ἐκάστην ἡμέραν ἀνεδέχοντο ἀγῶνας. εἴτε οὖν [...] Ῥωμαίους τοῖς κινδύνοις παραβαλεῖν ἐθέλοντες ταῦτα ἐποίουν [...] εἴτε καὶ καθάπαξ τῆς κατ' Αἴγυπτον δεσποτείας τῷ βασιλεῖ φθονήσαντες ἦσαν, λέγειν οὐ μοι παρίσταται· ἐλέγετο δ' ὡς χρήμασιν οἱ ἔνδον τὸν ῥήγα ὑποφθείραντες εἰς τοῦτο ἤγαγον."

Kinnamos indicates that Amalric indeed hoped to conquer Egypt without Byzantine help and would not tolerate dependence on Byzantium if he had other options. In addition to the direct rule of the coast and Lower Egypt, Byzantium would retain its overlordship of the kingdom of Jerusalem, Upper Egypt included.<sup>164</sup> Amalric's accomplishments proved contrary to his intentions. After the complete failure of the expedition, he needed the help of Byzantium for another attempt to conquer Egypt, or even to defend the crusader polities. Manouel showed willingness to risk a second campaign. Kinnamos relates how he dismissed the Egyptian embassy which had offered an annual tribute in exchange for a truce. Amalric, atoning for his conduct, traveled to Constantinople. There, among other things, the king agreed to his "subjection to the emperor" (δουλεία βασιλεῖ).<sup>165</sup>

Other evidence shows that Amalric had been willing to become the vassal of monarchs in Western Europe. Apparently, this step was unavoidable and tolerable given the difficult situation of his kingdom. It meant little in practice except in terms of prestige. Given the failure of Latin powers to provide expected support, Amalric rendered homage in person to the one ruler who was both able and willing to come to Jerusalem's aid. Moreover, he had agreed to renew his brother's oath to Manouel, which had acknowledged the emperor's superior rank, and now Amalric intensified this recognition by swearing an oath of fealty. The king's failure to effectively cooperate with the emperor's troops and fleet during the Egyptian campaign also increased the pressure to bow to Manouel's wishes and accept stricter demands in exchange for continued support, since he could be blamed for the destruction of large parts of the imperial fleet as a result of a storm on the return journey.<sup>166</sup> Kinnamos is supported by William of Tyre, who struggles to stay silent on his king's acceptance of imperial overlordship in his detailed account of Amalric's visit.<sup>167</sup>

Eustathios of Thessalonike, in an imperial oration dated to Epiphany 1176, celebrates this visit as one of Manouel's many accomplishments. An encomiast would represent other Christian rulers as the emperor's subordinates but would also make use of what was regarded as his imperial master's successes. Both Amalric and Bela of Hungary, mentioned in the same paragraph, were personally obliged to Manouel for the support that he had bestowed upon

164 Lilie (1993b), pp. 199–202.

165 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 280(11–13).

166 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 280(1–5). This is corroborated by other sources: see below, p. 443.

167 Lilie (1993b), pp. 204–209, 319; Magdalino (1993b), p. 75; Hamilton (2000), p. 66; Augé (2007), p. 293; Anca (2010), pp. 64, 67, 72, 89.

them. Their representation as subordinates was partially founded on these obligations but also reflects three generations of relatively stable Komnenian rule consolidating and enhancing the emperor's prestige and influence both in his realm and beyond its borders.<sup>168</sup>

William of Tyre describes the event as extraordinary: it was uncommon for a king of Jerusalem to leave the Holy Land, as Eustathios's reference to the visit accords. The king "with the great name" (μεγαλώλυμος) was "rewarded" (εὐηργέτητο) and "applauded" (συγκεκρότητο) for coming to the capital, an act that implies submission to imperial authority. His fight against the infidel and its generous support by the emperor are voiced, in line with Manouel's efforts to be perceived as protector of the Holy Land. The subordination of the king of Jerusalem is made evident by the statement that Amalric thought nothing of the dangers of the journey if only he could come and "prostrate himself prayerfully" (τῆς ἐν εὐχῇ προσκυνήσεως γένοιτο). If Manouel demanded proskynesis from Amalric, it would have been concealed from witnesses, especially the king's retinue. Anca submits that a prokypsis ceremony is likely.<sup>169</sup>

The bond between the emperor and his guest was strengthened by undertakings such as "exercises with horses" (ἱππασίαι γυμναστικάι), i.e., tournaments,<sup>170</sup> and hunting. Another expression of the unequal relationship between king and emperor is Eustathios's statement that the king departed as a "herald of the imperial might" (κῆρυξ τῆς βασιλικῆς κραταιότητος), thereby enhancing his power and frightening his enemies, "the [descendants] of Ismael" (Muslims) in particular. Thus Manouel's role as protector of the Holy Places and as Amalric's overlord are highlighted. κραταιότης or κράτος can also mean victory, therefore Eustathios may allude to the successful persuasion of the king to render homage. The paragraph ends with the celebration of Manouel as universal emperor above client kings such as Bela and Amalric.<sup>171</sup> The generous praise of Amalric indicates the king's compliance with Manouel's wishes during his visit, but to accord praise to the king reflects on the emperor: the greater the king, the greater the honor of acting as overlord and protector of his realm.

William of Tyre confirms that Manouel advertised his role as protector of the Holy Places during this visit, in accordance with Eustathios's reference to

168 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 13, pp. 213(82)–215(23). For a discussion of Bela's portrayal, see the first section of Ch. 5.

169 Jeffreys (1987); Kazhdan (1991), vol. 3, pp. 1732–1733, 1738–1739; Anca (2010), p. 190.

170 See above, p. 429.

171 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, no. 13, pp. 213(82)–215(23). See EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Orations*, trans. Stone, pp. 99–102, nn. 425–427, 431–436; also Ch. 5, pp. 182, 183–184.



the struggle against the infidel and the Holy Sepulcher. As with other visitors, the Byzantine capital, the largest Christian city in the world with its many churches, monasteries, and relics, was put to effective use.<sup>172</sup>

The subsequent alliance was of use not just to Byzantium's prestige but also the defense of the crusader polities, although Kinnamos, more interested in other aspects, refers to this only briefly and in passing. During renewed hostilities between Romania and Ikonion in 1173, Manouel successfully intimidated the Turks with his army so that many went over to him. "Learning of this and filled with courage thereby, the king of Palestine together with the prince of Antiocheia [Bohemond 111] moved against the barbarians of Berroia [Aleppo] and did great damage to them." According to Magdalino, Manouel's intervention in Asia Minor successfully halted a rapprochement between Nur ad-Din and Kilij Arslan 11 of Ikonion and was therefore of great value to the crusader polities.<sup>173</sup>

When mentioning the second Byzantine fleet dispatched against Egypt and the campaign against Ikonion, which was to a degree supported by the crusader polities, Kinnamos makes no reference to Jerusalem or Amalric's son and successor, Baldwin IV. Antioch especially supported this campaign, which ended with the defeat at Myriokephalon in 1176. Without mentioning this aspect, the narrative breaks off during the account of the campaign.<sup>174</sup> Choniates and other sources indicate that troops from Jerusalem and Antioch were present.<sup>175</sup> He does not explain the background of their presence, perhaps because of its limited military significance. Non-Byzantine sources relate that after Amalric's death in 1174, the alliance was renewed under the previous conditions in the name of his son Baldwin IV, then a minor. A new expedition to Egypt did not materialize and Manouel's death prevented any further common undertakings.<sup>176</sup> Eustathios's account of the conquest of Thessalonike

172 Augé (2007), p. 294; Anca (2010), p. 82.

173 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, pp. 289(13)–290(13); see p. 290(10–13): "ὁ δὲ Παλαιστίνης ῥήξ ἅμα τῷ Ἀντιοχείας πρίγκιπι ταῦτα πυθόμενοι θάρσους τε ὑποπλησθέντες κατὰ τῶν Βερροιαίων κινήθεντες βαρβάρων πολλὰ αὐτοὺς ἐζημίωσαν." See Magdalino (1993b), p. 76.

174 IOANNES KINNAMOS, *Hist.*, p. 300(4–7).

175 Magdalino (1993b), pp. 96–97. NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 178(7), quite characteristically limits himself to a generic reference to "Latins." On his mention of the involvement and heroic death of Manouel's brother-in-law, Baldwin of Antioch, see Ch. 7, p. 224.

176 Notable Byzantine diplomatic successes were the marriage alliances with France and Montferrat that also strengthened ties with Jerusalem. Hugh 111 of Burgundy, prospective husband of the heiress of Jerusalem, Sibylla, was first cousin to Anna-Agnes, and Baldwin, Sibylla's son and heir, was a nephew of Ioannes-Renier of Montferrat. See Lilie (1993b), pp. 211–219; Hamilton (2000), pp. 111–112, 148–149; also Ch. 3, p. 167, 168–169, and Ch. 4, p. 171.

indicates, however, that at the time of Andronikos's assumption of power, the king of Jerusalem (Baldwin IV) "behaved like an emperor to a degree surpassing the right measure." This suggests that Byzantine cultural influence in Jerusalem, which culminated under Amalric, remained strong, even after Romania's political influence had collapsed after Manouel's death and the removal of his widow and son.<sup>177</sup> The ceremonial imitation of Byzantine emperors had gone far enough to draw the archbishop's criticism.<sup>178</sup>

Choniates refers to the kingdom of Jerusalem under Amalric only in connection with the campaign against Egypt: rather than a glorious enterprise of imperial restoration, he portrays it as a manifestation of Manouel's "unreasonable desire for glory" (φιλοδοξία ἄκαίρος), ignoring more pressing needs of his empire. The *Historia* suggests that Manouel's Egyptian campaign foreshadowed Byzantium's decline. It criticizes "vying with emperors whose great fame and domain once did not modestly extend from one sea to another, but reached from the eastern limits to the western pillars [of Hercules]." According to Zorzi, these critical words reflect an official announcement or an imperial oration. The initiative for the campaign came from the *basileus*, Choniates suggests, and he won over "Amerrigos, the king of Jerusalem" (Ἱεροσολύμων ῥήξ) to his plan.<sup>179</sup>

Choniates recounts details that are not found in Kinnamos's account, suggesting different sources. Besides the total number of Byzantine ships—over 200—Choniates mentions 60 ships that had been sent to the king in Palestine in advance.<sup>180</sup> It appears that the Byzantines bore virtually the entire financial burden and were hoping for rapid gains. Amalric, however, still aspired to exclude Byzantium from a victory in Egypt and win control of the land later.

177 It is plausible that Byzantium renewed the alliance with Jerusalem under the regency government of Maria-Xene and the *prōtosebastos*, but political struggles within the empire prevented influence in the crusader polities. After Andronikos's coup of 1182, the Byzantine protectorate was history for good. See Hamilton (1988), pp. 372–375; (2000), pp. 160, 173–174.

178 EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKE, *Hist.*, p. 56(18–24); see p. 56(23): "ζήλων βασιλικῶς ὑπὲρ τοῦ καλοῦ." On this statement, see Mayer (1967), p. 180 and n. 173; Lillie (1993b), pp. 195, 228–229. On the strong Byzantine influence in the Holy Land under Amalric and Manouel's activity as a patron of monasteries and churches there, see Augé (2007), pp. 116–120, with further references; Harris (2014), pp. 116–117.

179 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 159(18)–160(32); see p. 160(26–29): "τὸ πρὸς βασιλεῖς ἀνθαμιλλᾶσθαι, οἷς τὸ κλέος πολὺ καὶ τὰ σχοινίσματα οὐκ ἀπὸ θαλάσσης μόνον ἕως θαλάσσης ὑφαπλούμενα πρὶν παρετέτατο, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν ἐφῶν ὀρισμάτων μέχρι τῶν ἐσπερίων δικνεῖτο στηλῶν." See Zorzi (2012), pp. 238–239.

180 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 160(32–44). Choniates's figures concur with those given by William of Tyre, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 239–240.

By 1167, unlike in 1165, Amalric probably no longer felt it necessary to involve Byzantium in an Egyptian campaign and was interested in an alliance solely for the defense of the crusader polities in the north, a condition for any offensive against Egypt as long as sufficient support from the West failed to materialize. The king's advances in Egypt had proven to him that he could succeed without the help of the ambitious Manouel. Involving the emperor in a successful campaign threatened to improve his already advantageous political position further.<sup>181</sup>

The critical narrative makes plain that Manouel's choice to rely on Amalric as an ally for this campaign was foolish, but more general introspective criticism of fellow Byzantines is prominent as well. The fleet commander Kontostephanos landed in Cyprus and sent envoys to Amalric to inquire if he should wait in Cyprus or sail to Jerusalem. The king, however, behaved "like Epimetheus, of whom they say that he was not [inclined to have] opinions, but shifts of opinions and exceedingly so" (κατὰ τὸν Ἐπιμηθέα, ᾧ τὸ μὲν μέλειν οὐκ εἶναι φασι τὸ δὲ μεταμέλειν καὶ μάλα). Amalric, regretting his support and encouragement of the Egyptian campaign, delayed. Finally, he asked Kontostephanos to come to Palestine to discuss plans. "Hesitation again [befell] Amerrigos, and strong regret bedeviled his soul, causing it to burn secretly. However, he advanced many other excuses—the pretext of Patroklos—even alleging, on top of everything [else], [the need for] gathering his own troops" (τὸν δ' Ἀμερρίγον αὐτίς ἢ μέλλησις καὶ ὁ μετὰμελος πολὺς ἐγκείμενος ὑπέτυφε τὴν ψυχὴν. πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν προσιθεὶς οὐδὲν ἤττον ἐπὶ πᾶσι καὶ τὴν τῶν οἰκείων στρατευμάτων προυβάλλετο συλλογὴν).<sup>182</sup> As noted by Lilie, the imperial fleet's strength must have been considerable, which would explain Amalric's reaction if indeed he hoped the enterprise would fail.<sup>183</sup> The Byzantine admiral was upset about the delays and wasted opportunities. The funds the emperor had provided for provisions were already running short.<sup>184</sup>

Finally, the forces of Byzantium and Jerusalem advanced toward Egypt by land, as the king advised; Tennis (Τούνιον) and Tanis (Τενέσιον)<sup>185</sup> surrendered. Facing Damietta, however, the Byzantine-Latin army and fleet encountered difficulties. After having destroyed a section of the city wall, Kontostephanos

181 Lilie (1993b), pp. 200, 309–318; Augé (2007), pp. 288–290.

182 For the reference to the proverbial pretext of Patroclus, see NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, trans. Pontani, vol. 1 (1994), p. 369, n. 35 (pp. 618–619).

183 Lilie (1993b), p. 317.

184 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 160(45)–161(75). On the concept of the "opportune moment" (καιρός) in Byzantine literature, see Zorzi (2012), p. 241.

185 Zorzi (2012), p. 242.

proposed an assault with siege ladders. The king, while pledging support for the plan, devised another delaying tactic. Affirming that siege towers were necessary, he deliberately hesitated to have them constructed, which angered the Byzantine commander. The siege made no progress, but Kontostephanos was under imperial orders to do nothing against the king's wishes. While an army was approaching to relieve the siege, the Byzantine soldiers were starving. Despising "Latin indifference" (Λατινική κόρυζα) and unwilling to wait any longer, Kontostephanos decided to act alone.<sup>186</sup>

The speech to the Byzantine soldiers that Choniates attributes to Kontostephanos refers to Amalric as "not in any way more well-disposed [toward us] than even our enemies" (καὶ τῶν ἐχθρῶν οὐκ οὐκον διακαιμένος ἄμεινον). Kontostephanos criticizes the king for his idleness and "crafty subtleties" (δολοφροσύνη), and mockingly refers to him as "comrade-in-arms" (συναγωνιστής) and "ally" (σύμμαχος). In an allusion to Homer, Choniates has Kontostephanos proclaim that the Egyptians served a potion to Amalric that turns warlike men into women and made him fall asleep. The speech deems it more likely, however, that the Egyptians bribed Amalric, which would render all treaties between him and the emperor null and void. "He honored him [the *basileus*] with his lips alone while in his heart he was far away" (χείλεσι μόνοις ἐκέϊνον τιμῶν, τῇ δὲ καρδίᾳ πόρρω φερόμενος)—an allusion to Matthew 15:8. Still, the army is exhorted to fight for honor's sake: "Separated from those arrogant, vainglorious knights from Palestine, faithless to the Romans as they have turned out to be, we shall attack the barbarians."<sup>187</sup> In such instances of Muslim-Latin confrontations, only the Muslim side is termed barbarous.<sup>188</sup> Kontostephanos's censure of King Amalric is also noteworthy in that it resembles Choniates's criticism of emperors and fellow Byzantines, censure and praise of non-Byzantines often being intended to reflect on Byzantines, the intended reflection plausibly being of greater interest in many cases.<sup>189</sup>

Encouraged by Kontostephanos's words and leadership, the Byzantine soldiers assaulted the walls with determination. The attack was going well until Amalric, awakening from his lethargy, rode to the attackers, accompanied by

186 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 162(76)–164(61).

187 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 164(62)–166(24); see p. 166(6–8): "ἀποκριθέντες τῶν Παλαιστίνηθεν ἱπποτῶν τῶν γαύρων τούτων καὶ ὑψαυχένων καὶ Ῥωμαίοις ἀπίστων, ὡς ἔδειξαν, προσβάλλωμεν τοῖς βαρβάροις." Kontostephanos's speech is a good example of a "hortatory speech" (λόγος παρακλητικός) in a military context. Choniates's work contains a few speeches of this type, which follow a Byzantine and ancient tradition, see Zorzi (2012), pp. 142–143.

188 See Ch. 9, p. 264, Ch. 10, p. 317, and Ch. 11, p. 336, for further examples.

189 Tinnefeld (1971); Magdalino (1983); Gentile Messina (2002); Simpson (2013), esp. ch. 3.3.

a selected escort, and called on the Byzantines to stop the assault because the citizens had promised to surrender. “The king himself turned to negotiations and concluded agreements which gave more joy to the [descendants] of Hagar than honor to the Romans” (αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ ῥήξ ἐς συμβάσεις τραπόμενος ἀσπασίους μᾶλλον τοῖς ἐκ τῆς Ἄγαρ ἢ Ῥωμαίους κυδαινούσας τὰς ξυνήκας εἰργάσατο). As observed by Lilie, Amalric knew that the capture of Damietta would benefit the Byzantines more than himself, because the city lay in the part of Egypt which, according to the negotiated treaty, would be under Romania’s, not under Jerusalem’s, authority. In secretly coming to an understanding with the defenders of Damietta, the king secured booty for himself.<sup>190</sup>

Even if Choniates criticizes the hasty departure of the Byzantine troops after the conclusion of this unfavorable peace treaty, without consent of their commander and in spite of the winter season, he has repeatedly emphasized the severe shortage of food, which made the situation unbearable, and contributed to the disastrous development of the campaign. The Byzantine fleet incurred heavy losses in a storm and scattered, with only some ships finding their way back to Constantinople, while Kontostephanos accompanied Amalric back to Jerusalem and then returned to the capital by land. The “Saracens” now sought to avoid another attack by offering precious gifts as a tribute to Manouel. Contrary to Kinnamos, Choniates does not say that Manouel rejected the tribute and alleges that the Egyptian embassy reinforced peace. At any rate, Manouel was still willing to work with Jerusalem for another attack on Egypt, but was preoccupied with other matters in the first half of the 1170s.<sup>191</sup> Both historians thus point to aspects of the *basileus*’s policy. Choniates is critical of the emperor’s judgment and vainglory and the employment of resources to the detriment of more pressing concerns, while Kinnamos is reflective of Manouel’s attempts to make use of his alliance with Jerusalem to enhance imperial prestige and influence, portraying himself as protector of the Holy Places and overlord of the crusader polities.

Despite differences of opinion and diverging interests between the leadership of Romania and that of the crusader polities, it therefore emerges that Manouel’s alliances were also mutually beneficial, that the Byzantine emperor was a plausible protector of the crusader polities also in Latin eyes and that a long-term arrangement with them was not bound to fail, not only due to common political interests against Muslim powers but also a certain cultural proximity and shared markers of identity.

190 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 166(25)–167(52). See Lilie (1993b), p. 317.

191 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 167(52)–168(78). See Zorzi (2012), p. 244.

## 7 The Praise of Frederikos (Frederick Barbarossa)

The narration of the last months of Frederick's life in the *Historia* as well as Choniates's Epiphany Oration of 1190 may implicitly argue for a Byzantine alliance with Barbarossa. The only unequivocally positive description of Byzantine-German relations in Choniates's account of Frederick Barbarossa's crusade is in the passage devoted to the ruler's reception in Laodikeia, when he was about to leave Byzantine territory (April 1190).<sup>192</sup> This is the first instance in the *Historia* in which Barbarossa's portrayal is decidedly and explicitly sympathetic:

There [in Laodikeia] they [the Germans] were received in a friendly fashion and accommodated as nowhere else, and all asked God to bestow everything which is good on the inhabitants of Laodikeia, especially the king himself: he lifted his hands to heaven, raised his eyes upwards, bent his knee to the ground and prayed that if anything was useful for life, if anything was wholesome for the souls, God the Father, who has charge of everything, should let it fly down on them. He added that if the Roman land had many such Christians and if the Romans had received the soldiers of Christ so kindly everywhere, then they would have gladly given all the treasures to them which they carried. Then, he would have of course received provisions peacefully and would have been beyond the Roman borders for a long time and the weapons of his men would have slumbered in their sheaths unstained of the blood of Christians.<sup>193</sup>

Barbarossa is thus portrayed as an exemplary ruler in this final part of the passage of the Third Crusade. The fact that the historian's hometown, Chonai, was not far from Laodikeia suggests that he was well informed.<sup>194</sup> It is crucial that

192 For possible political motives of the behavior of the Laodiceans, see Korobeinikov (2015), pp. 68–72.

193 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 412(18–29): “καὶ φιλοφρονηθέντες ἐκέισε ἀσπασιώτατα καὶ ξεναγωγηθέντες ὡς οὐχ ἑτέρωθι καὶ πάντες μὲν τοῖς Λαοδικεῦσι πάντα τὰ θεόθεν ἐπηύξαντο ἀγαθὰ, ὁ δὲ ῥῆξ καὶ μάλιστα ἀνατείνας γὰρ τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανὸν καὶ ἄρας ἄνω τὰ ὄμματα, τὸ δὲ γόνυ κάμψας εἰς γῆν, εἴ τι βιωφελές, εἴ τι ψυχῶν σωτήριον, ἐκ τοῦ τῶν ὄλων κηδεμόνος θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἐπικαταπτῆναι τούτοις ἰκέτευσεν ἐπειπῶν, ὡς εἰ Χριστιανοῖς τοιοῦτοις ἐνευθηγεῖτο ἢ τῶν Ῥωμαίων γῆ καὶ εὐγνωμόνως οὕτω τοὺς τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὀπλίτας καθυπεδέχοντο, κάκεινοι τὸν ἐπιφερόμενον πλοῦτον σφίσιν ἀγαπητῶς ἐδηδόκεισαν ἄν, τὰ ἐπιτήδεια μετ’ εἰρήνης παρέχοντες, καὶ αὐτοὶ τὰ ὄρια Ῥωμαίων πάλαι παρήλθοσαν ἀγεύστους Χριστιανῶν αἵματος καὶ ὑπνοῦσας ἐπὶ κουλεῶν τὰς λόγχας φέροντες.”

194 See the entries on Laodikeia and Chonai in Belke and Mersich (1990), pp. 222–225, 323–326.

this portrayal reflects unflatteringly on Isaakios and his subordinates who are not only blamed for the mismanagement of the crusade, but for many other shortcomings. It also shows that hostile Byzantine-German relations were by no means a matter of course.<sup>195</sup> Choniates's history indicates that this reflection on Isaakios and his subordinates was the primary motive for praising Barbarossa in such exalted terms. The indirect comparison was facilitated or motivated by the fact that as co-religionists they could both be portrayed as Christian rulers. In addition, Barbarossa had claimed universal imperial rule. It therefore reflected particularly badly on the Byzantine ruler to be surpassed by this rival claimant. Praise of Frederick's piety is to be seen as criticism of Manouel and later emperors and generally of fellow Byzantines, whose sins are identified as a major cause of the decline and ultimate collapse of the polity.<sup>196</sup>

Another aspect of this indirect *Kaiserkritik* in the context of the crusade is Choniates's description of Barbarossa's successes against the Turks, successes that the emperors of his time had failed to achieve. Byzantine regions and cities in Asia Minor were repeatedly attacked, plundered, or threatened. Chonai, the historian's hometown, suffered from incursions in which the Turks were involved.<sup>197</sup>

The Turks are further blamed for their failure to uphold a treaty they had concluded with Frederick: as had the Byzantines, they had guaranteed the safe passage of the German army, but attacked Frederick's forces in violation of mutual agreements and against their own interests. The king won an easy victory against the sons of the deposed sultan of Ikonion, capturing Philomelion. The Turks soon suffered another defeat, for Frederick saw through their plans and outwitted them. Choniates draws a clear contrast between the prudent German ruler, a formidable general, and his Turkish opponents, who, like Latins elsewhere in confrontation with Byzantines, are assigned the role of barbarians in conformity with established *topoi*.<sup>198</sup>

The Germans went on to capture Ikonion from the Turks. Choniates's portrayal of their behavior in the outer city, where they set up camp, again underlines Frederick's honorable intentions, with regards to the Byzantines as well: "They took nothing but the things they needed for sustenance and from nowhere else but the place where they were encamped. Then they continued

195 Neocleous (2019), pp. 114–115.

196 See also Todt (2001), esp. p. 135; Niehoff-Panagiotidis (2010a); pp. 199–200, Messis (2011a), p. 155. For Choniates's *Kaiserkritik*, see Tinnefeld (1971); Magdalino (1983); Gentile Messina (2002); Simpson (2013), esp. ch. 3.3.

197 Todt (2001), pp. 137–138.

198 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 412(30)–414(80); see Lechner (1955), esp. pp. 108–109.

on.”<sup>199</sup> The praise of Barbarossa’s victories against the Turks, said to have made him famous in the East, and the affirmation that the Turks treated him with an attitude of submission and feigned friendliness can be contrasted with Choniates’s criticism of Byzantine emperors who failed to keep the bold Turks in check.<sup>200</sup> The glorification of Frederick reaches a high point in the account of his passage through Armenia Minor: “He was received honorably by the Armenians, and after having spent many days there, he set out for the city of Antiochos [Antioch], always surrounded by great fame because of his sagacity and his invincible army, without having anything hostile coming his way.”<sup>201</sup> The following encomium is one of the best-known passages in the *Historia*:

In the eddies of the [River Saleph’s] water he drowned, a man worthy of good and lasting remembrance and of being justly congratulated for his end by those who are well disposed, not only because he was from a noble family and held sway over many peoples as inheritance from his forbears, but also because he was full of burning love for Christ more than all other Christian rulers of that time, and he abandoned his native land, royal luxury, repose, happiness at home with his loved ones as well as his splendid life, preferred unknown countries to his own and was willing to endure adversity with the Christians in Palestine for the name of Christ and to the honor of the Holy Sepulcher [...] Thus the zeal of the man was apostolic [...] And he had, as I am convinced, a blessed end.<sup>202</sup>

Choniates praises Frederick “in terms reminiscent of those used by Manuel’s encomiasts,” as observed by Magdalino.<sup>203</sup> The history makes plain that this

199 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 414(81–84).

200 On his criticism of imperial policy regarding the Turks of Asia Minor, see also Tinnefeld (1971), pp. 173–174.

201 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 415(16)–416(26); see p. 416(23–26): “Φιλοτιμίως δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀρμενίων προσδεχθεὶς καὶ συχνὰς ἡμέρας ἐκέισε προσδιατρίψας ἐς τὴν Ἀντιόχου πόλιν ὠρμητο μεταχωρεῖν, μέγα αἰεὶ περιβαλλόμενος ὄνομα ἐπὶ τε συνέσει καὶ τῷ ἀκαταμαχῆτῳ στρατεύματι καὶ μηδὲν ἔχων ὑπαντιάζον πολέμιον.”

202 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 416(26)–417(51): “[...] ταῖς τῶν ὑδάτων δίναις ἐναποπνίγεται, ἀνὴρ διὰ μνήμης ἀγεσθαι ἀγαθῆς καὶ διηνεκοῦς καὶ μακαρίζεσθαι δικαίως τοῦ τέλους παρὰ τοῖς εὐφρονοῦσιν ἄξιος, οὐ μόνον ὅτι περ εὖ εἶχε τοῦ γένους καὶ πολλῶν ἐκ τριγωνίας κατήρχεν ἐθνῶν, ἀλλ’ ὅτι τῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πόθῳ πυρούμενος ὑπὲρ τοὺς ὅπουδῆποτε τῶν τότε Χριστιανῶν αὐτοκράτορας πατρίδα καὶ χλιδὴν βασιλείον καὶ ἀνάπαυλαν καὶ τὸν οἶκοι μετὰ τῶν φιλιτάτων ὄλβον καὶ τὸν ὑπερήφανον βίοντον παρωσάμενος εἴλετο συγκακουχεῖσθαι τοῖς κατὰ Παλαιστίνην Χριστιανοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς τοῦ ζωοπαρόχου τάφου τιμῆς [...] οὕτως ἀποστολικὸς ἦν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὁ ζήλος [...] Καὶ ὁ μὲν, ὡς ἐμαυτὸν πείθω, μακαριστοῦ τετύχηκε τέλους.”

203 Magdalino (1983), p. 329.



ruler, who is identified as a barbarian or said to behave like one in encomiastic sources, including Choniates's Epiphany oration and Kinnamos's history, lived up to the imperial ideal to a higher degree than his contemporary Byzantine counterparts, which indirectly shames them. This is particularly evident in the portrayal of Frederick's sincere and selfless faith. Isaakios, especially, is censured for misguided piety, said to have manifested itself in acts of sacrilege.<sup>204</sup> Elsewhere, he is mocked for boasting that he would liberate Palestine. This may be a mere anecdote, albeit fitting because Choniates's Epiphany Oration of 1190 calls upon Isaakios to conquer all the land beyond the Euphrates, the land of Christ's passion and Palestine included. The contrast drawn could not be clearer: Frederick is credited with having made a serious attempt to regain Palestine for the Christians, while Isaakios obstructed this praiseworthy enterprise and engaged in empty boasts. In addition, mention of prospective imperial conquests in the oration might not only be ironic but might constitute a veiled argument for a different policy, namely an alliance with the Christian ruler Frederick in his enterprise. Had he fought Muslims in Asia Minor and the Holy Land, Isaakios could have followed the precedent of Manouel I and his predecessors.<sup>205</sup>

Crusading appears to have been less appealing for Byzantines, but criticism of the crusades in the historical works pertains to the motives of the crusaders regarding the empire and their behavior in Romania, never to the Holy War against Muslims.<sup>206</sup> Therefore, Choniates saw no issue with praising the enterprise as such, aware that Byzantium still claimed overlordship of Syria and Palestine, but that Isaakios II was in no position to assert this claim in the manner of the Komnenoi.

The encomiastic portrayal of the German monarch and the unflattering one of Emperor Isaakios can therefore be seen as a counterpart to the Epiphany Oration of 1190.<sup>207</sup> The oration was delivered after negotiations with Frederick had failed and before a final settlement was reached.<sup>208</sup> At that time, Choniates

204 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, pp. 383(8ff.), 442(33)–444(2).

205 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Hist.*, p. 432(69–77); *Orationes*, no. 9, p. 94(11–6). See Angelov (2006), pp. 60, 65. See also Magdalino (2007b), pp. 95–97, for one of Balsamon's epigrams that attributes similar ambitions to Isaakios. For the eschatological dimension and the prophecy of the last, messianic emperor, with which both Western and Byzantine rulers associated themselves, see esp. above, p. 429, Ch. 1, p. 32–33, Ch. 11, p. 325, and Ch. 12, p. 354.

206 See Stouraitis (2011); Kolia-Dermitzaki (2012); also Ch. 10, p. 308.

207 On this point, see also Mitsiou (2010), pp. 29–30; Simpson (2013), p. 55. The portrayal of Konstantinos IX Monomachos by Psellos's history, contradicting his encomia, was a precedent for such an approach, see Braounou (2016), p. 48.

208 Angelov (2006), pp. 57–58; Lounghis (2015a).

accordingly portrayed Barbarossa as a tyrant comparable even to Isaakios's predecessor Andronikos. This implied that Barbarossa, with his imperial aspirations, was an illegitimate ruler, like rebels against Isaakios's rule. Alluding to the German monarch's age—he was around twice as old as Isaakios—Choniates refers to him as an old man (γέρων), probably in order to implicitly contrast Barbarossa's diminished abilities with his imperial master's youthful strength and military prowess.<sup>209</sup> In the history, however, roles are reversed with the German emperor a vigorous leader and brilliant general, whereas Isaakios is portrayed as indecisive and weak, his troops acting in a cowardly manner, with the exception of non-Byzantine mercenaries.<sup>210</sup>

The oration also features some of the characteristics associated with barbarians in Frederick's description. His age is negatively associated with being experienced in deception. He is portrayed as a chameleon, which, according to a popular belief, is incapable of turning white, i.e., being sincere. The passage reflects suspicions concerning the goals of Barbarossa's crusade and tensions with Byzantine emperors, above all Manouel, for Frederick is said to "conceal his old rancor against us with a mask of love for God" (προσωπείω φιλοθεΐας τὸν καθ' ἡμῶν ἀρχαῖον κότον ἐπικρυπτόμενος). The tyrant image is reaffirmed by biblical passages speaking of two swords and a flying scythe punishing thievery and perjury. The swords are made for killing tyrants and perjurers; the obvious implication being that they are to be used against the invader by the emperor.<sup>211</sup>

Toward the end of the oration, Choniates again addresses the crusade and Barbarossa. His people, the "Alamanni," and thus Frederick himself, "supreme ruler of the Alamannic legions" (τῶν Ἀλαμαννικῶν ἐξάρχων λεγεῶνων), are referred to as braggarts. The role of Isaakios in the conflict is even compared to that of Christ confronting Satan (standing for the German ruler) in the desert. He is accused of blind hubris, striving for unattainable goals, including the utter humiliation of the emperor. In conformity with such established barbarian topoi, he is, of course, expected to fail miserably.<sup>212</sup> These personal traits are an allusion to the difficult negotiations concerning the passage of the crusaders' army and the recognition of Frederick's imperial title.<sup>213</sup>

209 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 9, pp. 88(1–20), 89(21). See also Mitsiou (2010), p. 29.

210 For the observation that Choniates makes use of a similar imagery and language in the history to parody his praise of Isaakios in *encomia*, see Macrides (1994), pp. 277–279.

211 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 9, pp. 89(21)–90(4).

212 NIKETAS CHONIATES, *Orations*, no. 9, pp. 99(21)–101(4).

213 See Angelov (2006), p. 65; also Ch. 12, pp. 350, 355–356.

As seen, the history makes clear that Choniates and many other Byzantines saw Frederick's intentions quite differently. They knew of the precedent of the Second Crusade, in which, despite difficulties, Manouel had managed to maintain the alliance and cooperate with Frederick's uncle Conrad. During the Third Crusade, Frederick himself made it evident that his intention was not to harm the Byzantines. Byzantine–Western relations remained fickle and friendlier relations possible, as the numerous alliances with Western powers even under Isaakios himself and his predecessors prove.

# Conclusion

## 1 Results of the Investigation

Assertions in antiquated scholarship, which occasionally still persist and remain influential, characterize the image of Latins in Byzantine historiography of the Komnenian period in terms of “xenophobia,” “Latinophobia,” “anti-Latin” stances, “pro-Latin” stances, rejection, mounting tension, hatred, and disdain. This has turned out to be a highly unfortunate distortion, based not so much on the primary sources, which do not support such unequivocal and simplistic interpretations, but more on the anachronistic perspectives and imaginations of modern historians. All chapters and case studies of the present investigation have found elements of ambiguity, shared markers of identity, markers of difference or otherness, common ground and tensions, introspective tendencies, and complexity. These nuanced dispositions mirror the political, religious, cultural, and other relations with the West, all of which were intertwined. The Byzantines recognized Western economic and military expansion, occasionally directed against them, as a threat if left unchecked. An increasingly relevant Latin West, however, also offered opportunities of friendship, kinship, alliance, collaboration, and integration.

While unflattering assessments are numerous in Byzantine historiography, they are often not applied to all Latins; when they are generalized, it is mostly in the context of hyperbolic rhetoric and military conflict. As has been consistently demonstrated in the numerous case studies of this book, these negative statements need to be seen in specific, multifaceted contexts. The characterization of the very same person or group, sometimes by the same author, might be dramatically different according to context and motivation. Examples include the portrayal of Barbarossa in Choniates’s Epiphany Oration of 1190 in contrast to his history, or that of Raymond of Poitiers, prince of Antioch, in imperial orations compared to Kinnamos’s later history. Rhetoric was also meant to convey contradictory statements and points of view to be deciphered and interpreted to make sense. Any statement, positive or negative in tone, is therefore situational rather than absolute. The contextualization of statements requires consideration of the work as a whole, all it has to say, and its comparison with works by the same and other authors. Literary preoccupations and the agenda of the historian—linked to the interaction with specific audiences such as an imperial or aristocratic patron or addressee, literary circles, or fellow literati—also need to be taken into account. Negative portrayals and *topoi* often serve an explicit or implicit positive representation of attributes of literati and their

audiences. Positive and differentiating descriptions of Latins likewise need to be investigated in terms of their function for the agenda of a literary work. Choniates, for instance, often uses his representation of Latins, e.g., Frederick Barbarossa or Conrad of Montferrat, to shame and exhort fellow Byzantines to mend their ways, sometimes also in order to deflect from criticism of himself or the social group with which he associates. Praise that reflects positively on Byzantine figures also characterizes the portrayal of figures such as Bohemond in the *Alexiad* or that of Raymond of Poitiers in Kinnamos's history.

An example of the relativization or mitigation of a negative statement is Choniates's blanket vilification of the Venetians, e.g., as crude and arrogant, in connection with *topoi* associated with trade and merchants, contrasting with the claims that some Venetians were integrated and assimilated to such a degree that they could not be distinguished from *Rōmaioi*. In this contradictory portrayal, he concurs with Kinnamos. Choniates, however, also relates his acquaintance and personal friendship with them. Anna Komnene elaborately vilifies the crusaders of the First Crusade, deeming Raymond of Toulouse a great exception, but she also attests to the respect he enjoyed among the crusaders and implies that they were themselves virtuous enough to greatly appreciate him! These historians, as well as others, criticize, blame, and malign fellow Byzantines in a manner that is sometimes equally unfavorable as their portrayal of Latins, or even more so, with the use of identical or similar language and terminology. The Constantinopolitan populace is an especially prominent target, but various individual emperors, aristocrats, or soldiers for instance are also taken aim at. Attitudes toward fellow Byzantines could therefore be just as ambivalent as attitudes toward Latins. Negative *topoi* could apply to anyone—the populace, non-Byzantines, provincials, competitors, or adversaries—and served as boundary markers to draw distinctions between the targeted groups or individuals and an implied socio-cultural aristocracy, i.e., the historian and at least parts of his or her historiographical audience. Many polarities are therefore socio-cultural in nature and not necessarily ethnic. Moreover, other peoples, Christian or non-Christian, could be characterized as worse or more barbaric than Latins, even after 1204, examples being Bulgarians or Cumans.

Another background to negative portrayals are factors such as the military threat emanating from Western powers, the passage of the crusades, attacks and raids on the part of Venetians, Normans, Pisans, crusaders, and others, or the rivalry with the Holy Roman Emperor for hegemony in Italy. All of this produced serious tensions. The applied portrayals and *topoi* were often adopted from imperial encomia, which were designed for the topical praise of emperors and a corresponding condemnation of opponents to imperial rule. Such general descriptions were usually intended as rhetorical hyperbole, as

the comparative investigation of literary works demonstrates. Tensions and hostile encounters—during the passage of crusades, for example—were often of a transient nature. Byzantine-Western relations of the long twelfth century were fickle and ambivalent rather than uniformly hostile or characterized by mounting tension. Importantly, none of the major leaders of the crusades intended to use a crusade for an attack against Constantinople. There is no necessity to interpret indications of tension as milestones on a road leading inevitably to the events of 1204.

Caution is thus in order in assessing links and drawing a distinction between literary representations and *topoi* and attitudes held by Byzantines. Additional caution is advised due to the many layers and filters between historical perceptions of events and people, their reflection in Byzantine sources, and their perception and interpretation by modern researchers. There is the problem of attitudes and identities derived from literary sources that are strongly Constantinopolitan in orientation and representative only of limited upper social strata or indeed literary society. It is also important not to assume a homogeneity of attitudes among these upper strata or even the *literati*. At the same time, although they make any conclusions no less tentative, there are indications of a strong interconnectedness of literary society, a relatively high level of (basic) literacy in lower social strata, and the relative effectiveness of communication by the Byzantine administration, favoring the hypothesis of some cohesion of ideas, attitudes, and identities in Byzantine society. An important debate in this context revolves around the attitudes in the populace, especially in Constantinople and after 1180. A close examination of historiography and other literary sources shows no evidence that these attitudes were distinctly “Latinophobic,” or any more so than in other segments of Byzantine society. Attacks against the Latin quarters in 1182, 1187, and 1203 were more a matter of contingency and an expression of political instability than acts motivated by “Latinophobia.” Likewise, the alleged popular “Latinophobia” aimed at Empress Maria-Xene of Antioch has no basis in the sources and is more of a myth propagated by Byzantinists. The historiographers suggest that, to the degree that she was resented, it was for reasons other than her origin. There were Latins on every side of the civil wars of the 1180s, and there is no sound reason to ascribe more “Latinophobic” attitudes to certain segments of the population. More generally, claims of Byzantine hostility directed against the Western presence, particularly Westerners in imperial service, have turned out to be doubtful for the long twelfth century, as the close examination of the oft-cited passages in question, especially Choniates and Tornikes, has revealed. This is not to say that hostile feelings and attitudes did not exist, but that they were not necessarily as strong and pervasive as has been claimed in the scholarship,

which often uncritically assumed them without conclusive evidence. For future scholarly investigations, it will be crucial to approach Byzantine-Latin relations with an open mind without applying distorting clichés and generalizations that conflict with the complexity of the source material.

On the contrary, Byzantine society should not be characterized as “xenophobic” but as relatively open, with a substantial assimilating and integrating impetus, occasional problems and tensions, e.g., with Italian merchants, notwithstanding. Latin residents lived in the midst of the Byzantines, at least in the capital, unlike the Jewish population, for instance. Integration was relatively easy provided that one adopted certain pillars of identity of a society that appears to have been characterized by attitudes of superiority. Such attitudes can be exemplified in the sense of self-sufficiency and superiority expressed by medieval Greek literati, who set themselves in a long and prestigious tradition. There are strong indications that they did not bother to learn other languages except for practical purposes. The identity markers that newcomers were expected to adopt, for example, could be dress, facial hair, language, pronunciation, or religious practices. It can easily be distorting, however, to define any one thing as a marker of either difference or proximity. This is apparent in the case of facial hair. The beardlessness of Latins is cited chiefly in a polemical context, and not all Latins shaved. Moreover, beardlessness could be appreciated in Byzantium and fashionable for Byzantine youths, although, or perhaps precisely because, it was a source of criticism. Groups with a special status such as the Varangians were encouraged to retain distinct identity markers, which, however, became a familiar element of society and relations with the Varangians are described as friendly. Byzantine historiography conveys a strong sense of the successful integration and assimilation of mercenaries, Italian merchants, or members of the imperial family hailing from the West or the crusader polities. New aristocratic dynasties of Western origin, chiefly Norman, rapidly became indistinguishable from other Byzantine aristocrats by adopting corresponding markers of identity such as language, dress, or literary and religious patronage. The exception of Empress Eirene-Bertha, who failed to conform to important identity markers, can be regarded as a confirmation of the rule. Overall, it is apparent that migration to and employment in Romania was attractive to many Latins of various social strata.

The said sense of superiority is reflected in the related ideologies of the Romans as God’s Chosen People and of ecumenism, i.e., universal imperial rule over the whole (Christian) ecumene and the peoples in it, including Latins. The relative openness to non-Byzantines, while particularly pronounced in the long twelfth century, can also be associated with this “universalist” Roman imperial tradition of integrating peoples into the Christian ecumene under the leading

Byzantine-Roman culture. Other (client) rulers were integrated into this culture and in the imperial hierarchy, as were provincial upper social strata. At least the nominal recognition of this ideology by Westerners was actively pursued by emperors and advertised in imperial panegyric, other imperial media, and encomiastically oriented historiography such as Kinnamos's history or the *Alexiad*. As these sources show, such an approach was applied to the rulers of Hungary, Jerusalem, Antioch, Serbia, and other polities in the long twelfth century, including Italian cities and maritime republics. It included an ambition to restore (at least recognition of) imperial rule in Italy, the Byzantine-Roman Empire's land of origin, and to extend it to more powerful monarchs, such as the German or the French ruler, the king of Sicily, and the pope, and more generally to obtain Western recognition of the Byzantine *basileus* as sole Roman emperor. The goal of ruling and integrating other peoples into the empire should not be dismissed with certainty as empty rhetoric because it remains conceivable that it was something that at least the imperial government and aristocrats believed in and propagated. It was also influential in the portrayal of Latins. However, it is apparent, particularly in Choniates, that ecumenism was also mocked, especially when emperors were unable to back up the ideology with material power. There is clear evidence, moreover, that the imperial government would pursue realpolitik and was pragmatic in its dealings with Western powers. Ecumenism could be more forcefully pursued when the Komnenian empire was relatively stable and could devote more attention and resources to it, particularly under Manouel. Certainly, this ideology of ruling over and integrating Latins in the Byzantine-Roman polity is also at odds with the notion in the scholarship, based on tenuous evidence, that differences between Westerners and Byzantines were irreconcilable or that Byzantium was in essence a "Latinophobic" or "xenophobic" society.

The core of Byzantine identity remained Roman in the long twelfth century, at least according to the representations of the upper social strata that dominate the source material. To be Roman encompassed many markers of identity such as religion, culture, or language. However, everyone, especially Latins, could adopt these markers, regardless of ethnic origin. Hellenism was an identity marker mainly in a literary context. "Anti-Latin Hellenism" is more relevant for the thirteenth and following centuries; an opposition of Hellenes to Latins and the corresponding notion of a less welcoming society distancing itself from proximity between Byzantines and Latins does not appear to characterize the long twelfth century.

The status of a foreigner or stranger was complex, multifaceted, fluid, and ambiguous, which is reflected in the Greek vocabulary. Many of the terms used do not have an unambiguous meaning; one could be a stranger or outsider in



many different respects and to varying degrees, depending on the perspective of the beholder. There could be many shades between the statuses of *Rōmaios* and outsider, such as a hybrid status referred to as “half-barbarian.” Any term can be misleading or simplifying; “foreigner” or “stranger,” however, are laden with modern associations relating to the modern nation state. Throughout this book the term “non-Byzantine” has been used instead. Social stratification on the grounds of cultural education (*paideia*), elegant demeanor (*asteiotēs*), the enormously important ability to write, speak, and pronounce well (*euglōttia*), and other virtues of literati and the upper social strata, regardless of ethnic origin, are a more powerful orientation in historiography than any polarity between Byzantine and non-Byzantine. The value attached to high literary and rhetorical education induced literati to draw distinctions between their level of *paideia* and everyone else’s. This *paideia* is strongly marked by Constantinople and the education and culture it stood for, which is significant for identity representations of the literati.

Connected with such attitudes of superiority and self-sufficiency displayed by the historiographers is their decidedly generic portrayal of Latins, a genericism that can be demonstrated and confirmed again and again in the case studies of this book. This is consistent with the somewhat similar portrayal of Byzantines in Western historiography of the period, although it is decidedly more pronounced in Byzantine sources. The cultural influence of Byzantium in the West and the crusader polities far exceeded the reverse. Even in cases in which a Western influence has been alleged, it can plausibly be explained without reference to the West, is not pervasive, or is doubtful or uncertain (e.g., in the case of the Komnenian novel). There is no noticeable major interest in the Latin language, except for practical purposes, and no equivalent to Western scholars who, in the long twelfth century, came to Byzantium to study and translate Greek literary works. The use of Latinisms, like the production of translations, demonstrates a certain recognition of the political importance of the Latin West and a willingness to use its languages for pragmatic and diplomatic purposes. However, the Hellenization of Latin terms, although rare, was established practice for Greek-speaking Romans. It was akin to Latin terms Hellenized in the East in ancient times. The addition of new Hellenized Western terms to the Byzantine register may also be seen as similar to Alexios I’s creation of new titles for the Byzantine aristocracy. However, the considerable migration of Westerners to Romania, e.g., empresses of Latin origin, did not lead to the introduction of major Western cultural elements. Indications are that the offspring of Westerners in Romania did not retain those elements in the longer term, at least on the imperial level and in upper social strata. The fact that the main characteristics of the portrayal of Latins do not fundamentally

change according to their relationship with Byzantines, whether they are resident in Romania, or appear as invaders, conquerors, or allies, confirms this generic tendency. Western cultural elements often go unmentioned or are converted into topoi; for example, Latin ideals of knighthood, while appreciated, are associated with barbaric foolhardiness, which turns into cowardice. Strong indicators of the generic trend are the frank admission of ignorance, for instance about kinship relations in Latin dynasties, and numerous “errors” and inaccuracies. As, usually, the historians would likely have been able to procure such information, the implication is that it was unimportant for their differently motivated literary compositions.

The attention devoted to Western culture in the histories and other literary works is limited to a few occasional references, hints, or details incidental to the main narrative. This phenomenon has been ascribed to the relative introspection that appears to have characterized Byzantium’s culture from the latter half of the seventh century. Literary society devoted attention to the “other” within the framework of its attitudes of social and cultural status and superiority, which—confronted with the developments of the long twelfth century—needed to be defended against external threats. This introspective tendency led to the phenomenon whereby “barbarians” and non-Byzantines, at least in literature, appear only when in direct contact with or of direct relevance to the empire. They often appear as instruments of God’s will to inflict harm on the empire and punish the Byzantines for their sins. The experience of 1204 did not disrupt the introspective and generic trend, as is evidenced by Choniates’s account of the Fourth Crusade and its aftermath.

Byzantium, with an elaborate diplomatic system at its disposal and its refined administration and written culture, of course had extensive knowledge of its neighbors and other peoples. Only a fraction of this knowledge, however, left its mark on literary sources, at least those still extant. This condition may be associated with introspection, but also with the pursuance of differently oriented goals by historiographers and writers. Ethnography was of rather marginal importance to them. They were more concerned with their literary goals and ambitions, their take on Byzantine imperial history, political propaganda, the justification of their personal actions, and the satisfaction of patrons. Those patrons in turn were interested in their own prestige or that of their family. This disinterest regarding the Latin West did not necessarily apply to other areas of life, but it may indicate more general attitudes of superiority or introspection.

While the connection between identity and otherness or alterity is of general validity, it needs to be particularly emphasized in the case of the representation of Latins (and other non-Byzantines) reflecting preoccupations with

interior Byzantine matters and concerns (introspection). As is the case with genericism, the Byzantine tendency seems more pronounced than that of the West. The variation in attention devoted to certain events and peoples can be explained by differing introspective motivations. An example is Kinnamos's focus on the Hungarians, against whom his ruler Manouel was successful, and on the Italian war, which needed to be cast in a positive light for the emperor. Equally striking is Anna Komnene's focus on the Normans, as opposed to the Turks, due to her father's relatively undisputed success against the former, especially when this is compared to the attention that Anna's contemporary Zonaras devotes to Normans. Generally, explicit and implicit praise and criticism of Byzantine rulers (imperial panegyric and *Kaiserkritik*) constitutes a dominant component of this introspective focus—e.g., in the portrayal of Frederick Barbarossa by both the critical Choniates and the encomiastic Kinnamos and accounts of the Second Crusade. Kinnamos glosses over difficulties with the French crusade, most likely because of the imperial marriage alliance with France at the time he was composing his account. The claims of danger posed by the crusade were precipitated by the presentation of Emperor Manouel as the empire's savior in Kinnamos's history, as well as encomia from the time of the crusade and later years of Manouel's reign. The portrayal in Choniates's *Historia*, on the other hand, is marked by an intention to lay blame on the *basileus*. Personal experiences and interests, in aspects of warfare, for instance, also had an influence on the portrayal of Latins, a prominent example being Kinnamos's extensive description of the Byzantine campaign in Italy (1155–56), as compared to Choniates's much briefer account.

If one reads between the lines and evaluates the many references and allusions as a whole, it becomes apparent, not just on the basis of historiography, that the West and Westerners played a crucial role in Romania as well as in the empire's relations with other powers. This was due to the shift of the empire's key economic and political zone into the Balkans and to Western expansion, especially of the Normans, Italian maritime powers, and crusaders. The Western orientation of the Byzantine government peaked under the rule of Manouel I (1143–80), which saw an unprecedented network of alliances and agreements with Western powers, often sealed by marriage, along with a focus on re-establishing Byzantine influence or hegemony, particularly in Italy, Hungary, and the crusader polities, Antioch in particular.

Despite genericism and introspection, a genuine interest in and intention to convey something about Latins for their own sake generally need to be considered as possibilities. The well-educated and intellectually refined authors were capable of consciously expressing themselves in an ambiguous manner and of conveying multiple messages in a single statement—indeed they were

trained to do so and their work is often fascinatingly complex and multi-layered. In many cases, personal observation of and contacts with Latins plausibly influenced their writings. For instance, the portrayal of Bohemond's character and external appearance, while following established literary patterns and motivated by an intention to contrast it with the image of Alexios, may convey something of Anna Komnene's personal impression, either from direct observation or through the mediation of witnesses.

The use of ancient Greek literature served as a formidable model for Byzantine literati in their emulation and imitation (*mimēsis*), but their works and representation of Latins can be regarded as innovative creations. Greek education, *paideia*, was indispensable to their social status and a crucial marker of identity. It predisposed them to use traditional, often obsolete, names established in antiquity such as "Scythians," "Alamanni," "Kelts," or "Huns" for contemporary peoples. The authors followed ancient models with respect to the structure, outline, genre, language, and content of their works. This emulation, however, was anything but rigid and slavish, as Byzantinists now appear to agree, and literati dealt with the ancient ideal in a creative and individual way. As demonstrated throughout this book, their preferences, interests, and motives, as well as audience and patrons, influenced the composition of their literary works. As for religious works such as the Bible and patristic and apocryphal literature, they were of equal importance for literati of the Komnenian period, and the employment of these models was no less creative and individual.

The portrayal of Latins, contrary to that of other non-Byzantines, conveys a particular political and cultural proximity and shared markers of identity. These also point to the possibility of an understanding with them and their integration in the Byzantine world. Such proximity is expressed in language, particularly identical vocabulary, indicating shared attitudes and identities. Relevant terms or key content items include "noble birth" (*eugeneia*), "bravery" (*gennaiotēs, andreia*), and "Christian" (*Christianos*). For educated Byzantines, as well as their Latin counterparts, it was standard practice to apply shared virtues, as well as a common religion and Greco-Roman inheritance. Shared cultural inheritance is expressed, for instance, in the application of ancient models such as Alexander the Great to Westerners, or the employment of Homeric language by Latin protagonists. In accordance with these similar markers of identity, Westerners are frequently compared to Byzantines. Illustrations of this include the comparisons that Anna Komnene draws between Bohemond and her father, Alexios; Choniates's counterposing of his portrayal of Frederick Barbarossa or Conrad of Montferrat with that of Isaakios II; or the rivalry between Barbarossa and Manouel I in Kinnamos's history.

These interconnected virtues of military prowess and nobility of birth (and/or spirit) are conveyed as shared virtues of Westerners and Byzantines, regardless of ethnic origin. This commonality was due to parallel developments of Western knighthood and nobility and of the imperial ideal and aristocratic ideology in Byzantium. The historians thus assimilate Latins in terms of social status (*taxis*) by applying the criterion of noble birth or lack thereof. These virtues are typically applied to Western rulers, nobles, knights, and soldiers, but do not appear in relation to others such as pirates and robbers. Prominent examples of the application of such virtues involve Robert Guiscard, Bohemond, Raymond of Toulouse, Raymond of Poitiers, Godfrey of Bouillon, Conrad III, Louis VII, Barbarossa, and rulers of the Latin Empire. Along with external beauty, a pronounced factor in the portrayal of Guiscard and Bohemond, the virtues appear prominently in the portrayal of members of the imperial family of Western origin: the empresses between 1118 and 1195, the Montferrat brothers, and Hungarian princes.

Beliefs in prophecies and eschatological ideas that included numerous similar elements constituted another shared marker of identity and attitudes, although there were many differing interpretations between and among Westerners and Byzantines. The city of Constantinople in particular was associated with apocalyptic and prophetic concepts. These influenced Byzantine-Latin relations especially during the passage of the crusades. Western prophecies did involve rule in Constantinople, but they did not explicitly include military conquest or war with the Byzantines. In sum, the evidence suggests that most crusaders did not favor such a course of action. Byzantine fears and prophetic predictions concerning military forces from the West or barbarian peoples more generally had to do rather with the fact that Constantinople was threatened and besieged at various times by various adversaries throughout the centuries. Corresponding fears and prophecies were not the crucial factor in shaping relations with the West, however, including during the events of 1203–4. Byzantines such as Choniates indicate that predictions were recognized as uncertain and ambiguous. A certain exception seems to have been the influence that prophetic beliefs had on Isaakios II's actions during the passage of the Third Crusade, but other factors, such as the political agenda of the patriarch Dositheos and Isaakios's own political considerations, especially regarding the Byzantine position in the Balkans, were involved. It should not be assumed, therefore, that the Byzantines generally believed that relations with the West were bound to result in disaster.

Literati also use negative terms such as "barbarian" (*barbaros*) to create a sense of distance or differentiation from Latins. However, as previously said, this drawing of distinctions is much more based on education, social status,

or other markers of identity characteristic for Byzantine literary society, and negative descriptions are often not reserved for Latins but also applied to fellow Byzantines. Particularly condemnatory negative portrayals of Latins as “Roman-haters” or “precursors of the Antichrist” appear in the context of the capture of Thessalonike in 1185 and the conquest of 1204, but are not characteristic otherwise.

The Christian religion of the Latins is mentioned quite frequently and taken for granted, even by Choniates after 1204. Byzantine historiography suggests rather positive attitudes in that regard; a common tendency to perceive and treat Latins as Christians, regardless of their sins, religious errors, or deviations. The histories do not refer to Latins as barbarians when they fight Muslims, the Muslims adopting the role of barbarians in these instances. This is all the more important because, for linguistic reasons alone, the histories were not intended for Latins and thus could hardly be expected to adopt a more conciliatory, flattering, or positive tone out of consideration, e.g., for diplomatic purposes. Christianity fulfilled an important mediating function, as in the exchange of gifts such as crosses or relics. This accords well with the fact that imperial and aristocratic marriage alliances with Latins were frequent during the long twelfth century and are portrayed as a matter of course in the histories. This clearly differentiates Westerners from other non-Byzantines.

References to religious differences can be found in comparatively few instances: Latin shaving habits, religious commonalities between Armenians and Latins, the claims of the papacy, as well as the participation of priests in warfare. The crusades are not criticized for their official purpose, but rather for suspected intentions directed against Romania. Christianity thus appears more as an element of proximity than division. Theological works of the period, while devoting space to a discussion of the Latin Church, are mainly concerned with the Byzantine “self” rather than with the Latin “other.” Orthodox religion (in the sense of the “correct” faith) and its defense and maintenance against perceived threats appear to be the main preoccupation. There are indications of hostile or even very hostile attitudes of Byzantine clerics toward the Latin Church and Latins more generally on religious grounds, but at the same time there is little to suggest that they were representative of the majority or dominant. Historiography, which takes the Christian religion of Latins for granted and ascribes meaning to it rather than smearing Latins as heretics or schismatics, supports this assessment. Indeed, religious polemic directed against Latin Christians but composed for a Byzantine audience suggests that many held positive, moderate, or conciliatory attitudes toward them.

The question of the repercussions of the Latin conquest of 1204 on this ambivalent relationship remains one for scholars to explore. The hypothesis

developed in the present study, chiefly based on Choniates's account, is that the relationship remained fickle, heterogeneous, and ambiguous beyond 1204. Differing attitudes among the Byzantine population emerge from Choniates's portrayal. While this portrayal, unsurprisingly, becomes decidedly more hostile in the narrative of the conquest and its aftermath and while it does, of course, reflect the bitter and personal experience of the historian himself and other Byzantines, Choniates's history maintained key characteristics of the portrayal of Latins and it remains ambivalent. The conquest, however, may have permanently destroyed far-reaching possibilities that the long twelfth century had offered, including greater mutual understanding and fruitful cultural exchange. Emperor Manouel's network of alliances and kinship with Western powers was rapidly dissolved due to the political upheavals after his death, but nothing indicates that this was bound to happen and that it could not have lasted. Byzantine historiography points to opportunities for finding a religious and political arrangement with the West on a large scale, opportunities that were no longer a possibility once the Byzantine Empire ceased to exist as a major political power in 1204. In addition, the establishment and preservation of Latin polities on the territory of the fallen empire necessitated continual efforts of legitimization and justification on the part of the conquerors, efforts that involved the humiliation and deprecation of the conquered and may be even described as "colonial". While this by no means caused unequivocally hostile relations with the native Greek-speaking population in all Latin polities—indeed these relations were complex and heterogeneous—it was bound to trigger a Byzantine response and lasting resentment, on top of the fact of the conquest itself. Choniates's hostile portrayals certainly reflect this. However, he and the other Byzantine historiographers of the long twelfth century describe relations with the West in a way that does not indicate that the conquest was the natural outcome of previous Byzantine-Western relations. Rather they represent relations with regard to the conquest as a sharp contrast.

The following stances, elements and attitudes thus emerge, among others, with respect to Latins: ambiguity; political, socio-cultural, and linguistic superiority; low cultural and linguistic interest; the established literary and rhetorical conventions of historiography; and openness to the integration of Latins in Byzantine society, provided that they were sufficiently willing to adopt required markers of identity. In terms of these markers, education, culture, and language are often represented as differentiating markers, which can equally apply to provincials or the general populace, however. To a lesser degree, eating habits, facial hair, and dress are also markers of difference. Proximity is expressed particularly by the representation of military prowess, religion, noble birth (*eugeneia*), and ideals of male and female beauty.

## 2 *Desiderata for Future Related Research*

The present study is but a small step, hopefully pointing to fruitful directions. Despite the major accomplishments of the last few decades, much remains to be done in the investigation of the Byzantine relationship with the West during the long twelfth century. A new comprehensive history of Byzantine-Western relations remains a *desideratum* and, given the sheer mass of source material and secondary literature, might best be undertaken by a group of scholars. Monographs are needed on the portrayal of the West and Westerners in oratory, hagiography, theology, and other literary works. An equally productive subject would be the comparative examination of historiography composed in the Komnenian and preceding period, namely the works discussed in this book in addition to the historiography of Manasses, Psellos, Attaleiates, Glykas, Zonaras, Kedrenos, and Skylitzes. A particularly interesting question is how perceptions of the eleventh or twelfth century might have influenced or altered the depiction of earlier times with respect to the sources these historians employed.<sup>1</sup>

Many aspects of Byzantine literature could benefit from further investigation, for instance the importance of humor, mockery, subversion and irony, questions of gender, emotions, or the attitudes of the lower strata of Byzantine society, allowing scholars to formulate more nuanced hypotheses about Byzantine attitudes and literary representations.<sup>2</sup> In this context, research on Byzantine identity (or identities) is being developed further.<sup>3</sup> Investigations of other particular aspects of the Byzantine-Western relationship, such as facial hair, clothing, translations, the culture of experts, or the culture of dialogue, also seem promising.<sup>4</sup> There is, of course, always the potential to gain new insights by testing and applying various methodological approaches. This includes, for example, an approach focusing on media and forms of communication, such as rituals and games,<sup>5</sup> which is fruitful in the field of comparative studies. Such studies could be directed toward representations of the Greco-Roman past in medieval Latin and Greek literature, e.g., of prominent historical figures such as Augustus or Julius Caesar. A major achievement would be

1 See Maisano (1978/1979) as an example.

2 See Messis (2011a); Neil and Garland (2013); Riehle (2014); Constantinou and Meyer (2019); Koder, Stouraitis, and Heilo (2019); Neville (2019a, 2019b); Rapp and Braounou (2019).

3 See indicatively Kaldellis (2007a); Page (2008); Koder (2011); Stouraitis (2014); Durak and Jevtić (2019).

4 E.g., Gastgeber (2001); Messis (2011a); Cameron (2016); Jensen (2018).

5 See, for example, Kiening (2007); Anca (2010).



more comprehensive and systematic comparisons of the image of Byzantines or “Greeks” in Western sources with that of Latins in Greek literature, with a view to shedding light on questions such as that of a “mirror image” or interdependence.<sup>6</sup> How the introspective tendencies of Byzantine historiography differ from similar tendencies in Western medieval historiography should be further examined. Numismatic and sigillographic evidence and material culture merit further studies of cross-cultural influences, e.g., with regard to imagery and inscriptions.<sup>7</sup> The vast relevant source material on religious relations requires further attention. The religious assessment of Latins in the histories should be systematically compared with theological works and religious polemic.<sup>8</sup> An approach presented by Demacopoulos of interpreting the Fourth Crusade and its aftermath as a kind of colonial encounter could be tested more systematically with other Byzantine (and Western) sources.<sup>9</sup>

This enumeration of promising fields of research concerning the Byzantine-Western relationship in the long twelfth century, as well as related topics, could be extended indefinitely. The present investigation has hopefully demonstrated that the topic is by no means exhausted, that Byzantine attitudes appear to have been ambiguous and complex and ought to be approached with an open mind while discarding old stereotypes. This book thus seeks to inspire scholars to reassess these attitudes continually and develop innovative ways of approaching them.

6 See Schreiner (1992); Tounta (2010b).

7 See, for example, Parani (2003); Drews and Scholl (2016).

8 E.g., ANDRONIKOS KAMATEROS, *Sacred Arsenal*.

9 Demacopoulos (2019).



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# Index

- Adhemar of Le Puy 318n.51
- Adrianople 334, 340, 397–400, 404  
  Battle of (1205) 363n.115, 382, 392, 394
- Adriatic 76, 80, 83, 89, 94, 229, 310
- Aegean 76n.5, 85, 105, 111, 117, 128, 223, 278
- Aeneas 144
- Agnes of Châtillon 146, 161n.116, 183, 188
- Agnes of France. *See* Anna-Agnes
- Alamanni (for Germans) 15, 138, 144,  
  153n.72, 154, 158, 185, 205, 212, 213, 323,  
  327, 330, 333, 334, 341, 342, 344, 350n.51,  
  352, 357, 361, 364n.121, 416, 448, 458
- Aldobrandini, ruler of Attaleia 125n.260, 401
- Aldruda Frangipane 132–133, 134–135, 136,  
  137–138
- Alduin, Sicilian commander 297, 298, 299,  
  300, 301, 303, 304, 306–307
- Aleramici (dynasty) 171, 187. *See also*  
  Montferrat (margrave)
- Alexander III, pope 137, 168, 218n.60, 339,  
  342, 345, 346, 347, 349, 350–351
- Alexander of Conversano, count of  
  Gravina 218–219, 220, 221, 280, 281,  
  282, 283, 288
- Alexander the Great 306, 359, 423n.103, 458
- Alexiad* 15n.62, 44, 45–46, 46–49, 56, 61,  
  76–83, 103–105, 139–140, 141, 203–204,  
  207–211, 213–214, 215, 216, 217, 222–223,  
  225–227, 228, 229, 231–232, 245–271,  
  272, 298n.266, 308–321, 375, 406–413,  
  451, 454. *See also* Anna Komnene
- Alexian Komnenian Muses 61–62, 104n.136
- Alexios I Komnenos 1n.2, 13n.49, 38n.117, 44,  
  46–48, 54, 55–56, 57, 58, 61–62, 68–69,  
  76–84, 103–105, 141, 145, 150, 201, 203,  
  207, 208–211, 213, 214, 215–216, 217, 223,  
  224, 226, 228, 229, 231–232, 235n.5,  
  236, 237, 245–270, 272, 297, 308–320,  
  406, 408–413, 418, 420, 429, 432n.148,  
  455, 458
- Alexios II Komnenos 15n.64, 45n.151,  
  49n.178, 106, 120n.236, 139, 146,  
  159n.106, 160n.106, 165, 166, 172, 173, 175,  
  183, 188, 189, 293, 335, 402, 425
- Pseudo-Alexios 294, 297, 303
- Alexios III Angelos (Komnenos) 1n.2,  
  26n.34, 45n.151, 52, 63n.266, 98–99,  
  109, 111, 112, 117, 124, 125, 126, 127–128,  
  160n.107, 177, 191n.50, 227, 357, 358,  
  360–362, 364, 374, 389, 390, 392, 395
- Alexios IV Angelos 45n.151, 99, 111–112,  
  202n.14, 363, 373, 374, 375–376, 377,  
  378, 390
- Alexios V Doukas 45n.151, 202n.14, 377,  
  378, 390
- Alexios Axouchos 89, 132, 286, 290,  
  416
- Alexios Branas, general and rebel 120, 121,  
  122–123, 175, 176–177, 177–179, 180, 212–  
  213, 305
- Alexios Giphardos 233
- Alexios Komnenos, heir apparent of Ioannes  
  II 150–151
- Alexios Komnenos, *megas doux* 285, 286
- Alexios Komnenos, *prôtosebastos*,  
  regent 49n.178, 106, 107, 108–111, 115,  
  120, 159, 160–161, 164, 167n.135, 173, 174,  
  190, 202n.14, 440n.177
- Alexios-Bela. *See* Bela III
- Alienation (idea of Byzantine-  
  Western) 13, 16
- Alliances (Byzantine-Western) 3, 4, 14,  
  33n.81, 60–61, 76, 77, 79, 86, 89–90, 91,  
  94, 97, 98, 102, 106, 125, 129–131, 134, 135,  
  137–138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 146n.42, 148,  
  152, 154n.76, 157, 159, 164, 167, 168–169,  
  171–172, 173, 175, 181, 188, 189n.36, 190–  
  191, 193, 212, 219–221, 231, 248, 250, 273,  
  280, 287, 291, 292, 316, 318, 322, 325, 326,  
  330, 331, 332, 335, 336, 337, 339, 343,  
  348, 363, 368, 371, 406–449, 450, 456,  
  457, 460, 461
- Manouel I's network of alliances and  
  kinship 97–98, 129–131, 132, 134, 135,  
  137, 157, 168, 171–172, 294, 339, 371, 406,  
  432n.144, 443, 457, 461
- Almos, Hungarian pretender 142, 194, 195
- Alterity or otherness 5–9, 10, 21, 69, 249,  
  456–457
- Amalfi 222

- Amalfitans 78–79, 80, 81, 124, 125, 376, 381, 401
- Amalric I, king of Jerusalem 184n.16, 357, 421n.88, 431n.144, 433–443
- Amazons 135, 336
- Ambivalence 3, 4, 12, 13n.53, 14, 16, 17, 29, 52, 60n.240, 67, 76, 98, 101, 104, 123, 148, 209, 215, 216, 217, 249, 250, 259, 277, 282, 286, 293, 299, 302, 303, 317, 324, 325, 373, 378, 379, 383, 388, 391, 392, 403, 405, 450, 451, 452, 457–458, 460, 461, 463. *See also* Complexity, Context, Differentiation, Nuance
- Ami of Giovinazzo 257
- Ancona 75, 86, 89, 97n.99, 98, 130, 131–138, 169n.147, 278, 286, 290, 344, 416n.64  
March of Ancona 132
- Anconitans 131–138, 344n.29
- Andronikos I Komnenos 45n.151, 96n.97, 98, 99, 103, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112n.192, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119–120, 122, 156, 160–161, 162–163, 166, 173, 175, 185, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 195n.66, 202, 204, 221, 232, 233n.141, 238, 239, 291, 292–293, 294, 295, 297, 303, 305, 341, 361n.103, 362, 388, 390n.84, 422, 424, 432, 440, 448
- Andronikos Kamateros 67–68, 350, 351n.55, 463
- Andronikos Komnenos, second-eldest son of Ioannes II 59
- Andronikos Kontostephanos 110, 118, 189, 212, 238, 366, 435, 436, 441–443
- Angelo/ Ἐγγέλως, Italian knight 212, 285
- Angeloi, dynasty 1, 58, 63, 65, 68, 75, 98, 99, 112, 124, 174, 175, 341, 378, 395
- Anger or hatred (topos or emotion) 13–14, 88, 98, 99, 107, 121, 122, 126, 167n.135, 183, 217, 240, 258, 264, 267, 274, 281, 282, 299, 300, 304, 344, 348, 372, 377, 379, 386, 448, 450, 460
- Anna-Agnes of France, Byzantine empress 15n.64, 106, 144n.33, 146, 147n.44, 153n.75, 166–170, 335, 336, 439n.176
- Anna Dalassene 139, 145, 229
- Anna Komnene 3, 35, 39, 41n.128, 44, 45, 45–46, 46–49, 50, 59, 76–82, 83, 88n.58, 94, 103–105, 132, 139, 140, 141, 151n.63, 155n.82, 164n.125, 200n.6, 201, 202n.12, 203–204, 207–211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 221, 222–223, 226–227, 228, 229, 231–232, 235n.5, 236, 240, 245–271, 272, 285, 297–298, 308–321, 365, 406–413, 451, 457, 458
- Anna Komnene, daughter of Manouel I 156
- Antichrist (Latin conquerors as his precursors) 379, 460
- Anti-heroines or anti-heroines 245–246, 252, 268
- Anti-Latin attitudes or factions (alleged) 10n.36, 16n.69, 17, 21, 65, 101, 107–109, 126, 159, 161, 166, 186, 187, 239, 297n.263, 298, 303, 367, 405, 450, 454. *See also* Latinophobia, Origin, Xenophobia
- Antioch  
City or principality of 66, 82, 159, 162n.118, 164, 182, 195n.66, 204, 211, 212, 224, 226, 231, 245, 246n.7, 247, 261, 262, 263, 266, 268, 270, 285, 314–315, 316, 318, 413, 418–429, 430–435, 439, 446, 454, 457  
Patriarch(ate). *See* Patriarch(ate) of Antioch
- Antiochenes 163n.118, 211, 224, 315n.39, 419, 421n.94, 422, 423, 424, 426, 427, 428, 430, 432, 433
- Antiquity 3, 15n.64, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, 36, 50, 55, 87n.56, 101, 144, 145, 193n.57, 229, 276, 293, 315, 329, 379, 442n.187, 455, 458. *See also* Models (literary), Traditions (literary)
- Anti-Western. *See* Anti-Latin
- Apocalyptic concepts 32–33, 251, 308, 310, 325, 354, 390–391, 422n.97, 429, 447n.205, 459. *See also* Prophecy
- Apulia 132, 158n.100, 220, 229, 250, 254, 285, 290, 341, 414
- Arabs/ Arabic 26, 34, 70, 180, 298
- Archaeology 70
- Aristocracy/ Aristocrats (Byzantine) 23, 26, 27n.47, 34, 36–38, 39, 40, 41n.128, 42, 44, 48n.173, 56, 59, 60, 62, 71, 76, 81, 83, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 117, 118, 121, 140, 148, 150, 155, 157, 158, 160, 163, 167, 170,

- Aristocracy/Aristocrats (*cont.*)  
 173, 175, 180, 181, 186–187, 190, 194, 196,  
 205, 207, 208, 209, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217,  
 224–233, 234n.3, 235, 236, 239, 256, 288,  
 291, 292, 293, 318, 341, 361, 369, 374, 377,  
 384, 388, 392, 393n.94, 404, 408, 419,  
 422, 424–425, 450, 451, 453, 454, 455,  
 459, 460. *See also* Higher social strata
- Aristocratic dynasties founded by  
 Westerners 224–233, 453
- Civil aristocracy 38n.117, 39, 42, 52,  
 102n.126, 187, 236, 239, 292
- Military aristocracy 3, 36–38, 44, 56,  
 59, 181, 187, 214, 217, 224, 235, 239, 408,  
 424–425
- Armenians 26, 27, 28n.49, 30n.64, 70,  
 423n.103, 298–299, 389, 425, 427,  
 430n.139, 433, 446, 460
- Arrogance (topos or concept) 84, 86, 91,  
 94, 95–96, 97–98, 152–153, 247, 256,  
 257, 261, 263, 265, 266, 267, 283, 294,  
 298, 304, 311, 312, 313, 316, 320, 326–327,  
 327, 328, 330, 331, 333, 334, 335, 340n.4,  
 344n.29, 350n.51, 359, 379, 384, 386, 387,  
 393, 394, 398, 400, 407, 408, 422, 427,  
 429, 430, 442, 448, 451
- Applied to Byzantines 284, 291, 294, 295,  
 302, 359, 393
- Arsenios/Antonios, abbot of Patmos 69
- Art 70, 71, 81n.33, 379
- Asclettin, chancellor of William I of  
 Sicily 281, 282
- Asen. *See* Ivan Asen I
- Asia Minor 132, 211, 215, 227, 246, 263, 268,  
 288n.216, 311, 312, 313, 314, 316, 326, 329,  
 330, 332, 333, 334, 335, 337, 355, 356,  
 357, 388, 393, 399, 401, 411, 439, 445,  
 446n.200, 447
- Assimilation 8, 27, 28, 30, 95, 170, 182, 369,  
 451, 453, 459
- Astrology 33, 57n.223, 188–189, 259,  
 289, 366
- Athanasios, Byzantine patriarch of  
 Antioch 434
- Athens 389, 391
- Atticism 41, 43
- Attitudes 1–11, 12n.42, 16, 24, 32, 33, 35, 41, 42,  
 43, 56, 61, 65, 67, 68n.301, 70, 87, 92n.79,  
 97, 101, 104, 106, 123, 126, 138, 141, 148,  
 150, 161, 166, 170, 172, 181, 187, 197, 200,  
 209, 214, 215, 216, 217, 222, 263, 276, 277,  
 281, 292, 300, 303, 323, 325, 335n.81, 336,  
 344, 354, 355, 371, 373, 375, 376, 377, 383,  
 388, 390, 391, 392, 400, 403, 408, 426,  
 451, 452–453, 455, 456, 458, 459, 460,  
 461, 462, 463. *See also* Mentality
- Audience of Byzantine literature 2, 34, 36,  
 38, 42, 43–44, 45, 47, 57, 59, 61, 62, 65,  
 126, 135, 147, 158, 192, 204, 221, 246, 252,  
 257, 284, 288, 292, 293, 299, 302, 360,  
 367, 383, 388, 392, 398, 400, 429, 435,  
 450, 451, 458, 460
- Augustus 23n.15, 55n.212, 462
- Austria 415
- Austrians 414–415
- Axouchoi (aristocratic dynasty) 198n.29,  
 225. *See also* Alexios Axouchos,  
 Ioannes Axouchos
- Baldwin I, king of Jerusalem 313, 316–317
- Baldwin I, Latin emperor 372, 376n.26, 377,  
 382, 385–386, 387, 388, 390–391, 392,  
 393, 394, 395, 396, 401–402
- Baldwin III, king of Jerusalem 212, 421n.88,  
 428, 430–434, 435
- Baldwin IV, king of Jerusalem 171, 421n.88,  
 431n.144, 439, 440
- Baldwin V, king of Jerusalem 171, 439n.176
- Baldwin of Antioch, commander of Manouel  
 I 224, 439n.175
- Balkans 1, 60n.240, 67, 181, 191, 194, 247, 252,  
 254, 258, 259, 353, 457, 459
- Barbarians or barbarism 3, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34,  
 61, 62, 81, 82, 87, 88, 100, 102, 104, 112,  
 113, 123, 125, 126, 140, 141, 146, 147, 152,  
 192, 193, 199, 200, 201, 202n.16, 204, 206,  
 209, 214, 215, 219n.65, 233n.142, 235–236,  
 237, 238–239, 240, 240–241, 249, 252,  
 253, 257, 264, 266, 268, 269, 275, 277,  
 282, 284, 285, 292, 295–296, 296, 298,  
 300, 304, 305, 310, 311, 312, 313, 315, 317,  
 324, 329–330, 332, 333, 336, 341, 344,  
 346, 347n.38, 348, 349, 352, 366, 369,  
 376, 382, 391, 393, 399, 402, 414, 445,  
 447, 448, 451, 455, 456, 459, 459–460.  
*See also* Muslims



- Barbaric behavior ascribed to  
 Byzantines 297–298, 310, 391
- Bari 130, 219, 229, 254n.44, 261, 274, 281n.186, 282, 283, 288n.216
- Basileios of Achrida 63, 68, 146n.40, 148, 149, 151n.63, 152–153, 154n.76, 155n.83, 156, 157
- Battle of Adrianople (1205). *See* Adrianople
- Battle of Manzikert (1071). *See* Manzikert
- Battle of Myriokephalon (1176). *See* Myriokephalon
- Battle on the Elster (1080) 407–408
- Beardlessness 172, 259, 269, 270n.134, 300, 379–380, 398n.110, 453
- Beauty (ideals of) 88n.58, 143, 146, 147, 151, 160, 161n.116, 162–163, 164, 166, 172, 174, 175, 246–247, 248, 249, 269, 270, 300, 420, 425, 427, 428, 458, 459, 461
- Ignorance of or lack of appreciation for beauty (topos or concept) 83, 239, 301, 302, 307, 376, 379, 386, 389
- Bela III, king of Hungary 147, 161n.116, 163, 181–193, 194, 196, 197n.75, 198, 212n.32, 224, 238n.24, 292n.236, 365n.2, 437, 438
- Berengar, count of Sulzbach 149
- Bertha of Sulzbach. *See* Eirene–Bertha
- Bible 57, 135, 274, 276, 327, 381, 389, 448, 458
- Blachernai 184, 188, 202n.14, 227, 354
- Boastfulness (topos or concept) 83, 84, 91, 119, 121, 214, 264, 266, 290, 302, 313, 318, 320, 329, 379, 447, 448
- Applied to Byzantines 447
- Boeotia 276
- Bohemia(ns) 332, 333n.68, 348n.47, 368
- Bohemond I, prince of Antioch 15n.62, 69, 70, 77, 82, 104, 105, 142, 164n.125, 207, 208, 211n.22, 222, 223, 226, 228, 229, 231, 232, 245–247, 248, 249, 250, 252, 254, 255, 256–257, 258, 260–271, 272, 309, 310, 313, 314, 315, 316, 319, 321, 375, 410, 411, 413, 451, 458, 459
- Bohemond III, prince of Antioch 428, 434, 439
- Boniface of Montferrat 147–148, 177, 363–364, 372, 385n.65, 387–388, 389, 391, 392, 395, 401
- Boris, Hungarian pretender 194–195
- Briennus, Norman general 256, 260–261
- Brindisi 126, 130, 229, 253, 285, 286, 289
- Bulgaria 392, 399
- Bulgarians 26, 191, 353, 395, 399, 451. *See* Vlachobulgarians
- Byzantine influence on Western culture 35, 71, 81n.33, 221, 271–272, 430, 433, 440, 455
- Byzantinization 220, 224, 225, 230, 234
- Calabria 69, 111, 229, 250, 254, 290, 341, 414
- Calabrians 127, 144
- Cavalry (Latin) 135, 161, 178–179, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 224, 226, 249, 257, 260, 261, 271, 282, 283, 285, 295, 298, 302, 303, 311, 316, 317, 318, 330, 373, 389, 392, 394, 425, 429, 432, 438. *See also* Jousting, Knights, Military, Military prowess
- Celestine III, pope 147, 189, 190n.42, 191
- Ceremonial 7, 87, 88, 188, 210, 306, 356, 438, 440. *See also* Rituals
- Choirobakchoi (flood) 326, 327, 334
- Christian fraternity 66, 67, 193, 264, 265, 306, 316, 318, 331, 332n.64, 337, 342, 383, 408–409. *See also* Christianity, Religion
- Christian of Mainz, chancellor of Frederick Barbarossa 136, 171, 175, 176, 281n.189, 343–344
- Christianity 1, 2n.4, 3, 17, 21, 23, 24, 26n.40, 29, 30, 32, 65–69, 70, 80, 116, 140, 151, 154, 174, 179–180, 191, 193, 200, 214n.41, 250, 255, 256, 257, 264–265, 267–268, 271, 276, 277, 278, 282, 296, 299, 301, 302, 306, 309–310, 314, 316, 317, 318, 332, 336, 336–337, 342, 367, 368, 369, 371, 373–374, 380, 381, 383, 385–386, 389, 396, 403, 408–409, 417, 421, 422, 427, 437, 438–439, 444, 445, 446, 447, 453–454, 458, 460. *See also* Christian fraternity, Jesus Christ, Religion
- Christodoulos (saint) 68, 69–70, 83n.37, 127n.271, 307n.307
- Church bells 71
- Church (Byzantine) 67, 82, 140, 151, 152, 225, 300, 302, 358, 362, 375
- Church (Latin) 52, 56, 80, 273, 371, 397–398, 460. *See also* Christianity, Clergy, Papacy, Religion
- Cilicia 27, 59, 195, 211n.22, 262n.87, 422, 423n.101, 424, 428, 430, 432

- Clergy 28, 50, 56n.219, 69, 106n.157, 114n.200, 116, 120, 126, 149, 157, 160n.110, 206, 240, 241, 282, 296, 316, 317, 320, 361, 378, 395, 398n.110, 427, 460
- Client rulers (Westerners as) 71, 135, 136, 137, 182, 189n.36, 193, 197, 210, 212, 220, 221, 271, 287n.212, 314, 368, 393, 420, 423, 428, 431, 432, 434, 435, 437–438, 454
- Coloman, king of Hungary 141, 142–143, 194, 195
- Colonial encounter 371, 461, 463
- Commerce. *See* Trade
- Complexity of image of and relations with  
 Latins 3, 5, 6, 10, 13–14, 17, 29, 52, 53, 61, 131, 293, 303, 308, 377, 403, 406, 450, 453, 454, 458, 459, 463
- Conrad III, king of Germany 89n.64, 148, 149, 153n.72, 154, 157n.92, 158, 322–338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 348, 352n.61, 414, 415–416, 418, 432n.146, 449, 459
- Conrad of Montferrat 107n.158, 120, 174–180, 182, 192, 213, 225n.93, 343–344, 451, 458
- Constance of Antioch 231, 419, 424, 434
- Constantine. *See* Konstantinos
- Constantinople 28, 30, 46, 52, 54, 55, 56, 68, 69, 109, 163, 175, 192n.53, 205, 230, 231, 254, 270, 291n.233, 292, 293, 298n.268, 303, 304, 345, 351, 366, 379, 408, 417, 423n.103, 427, 429, 433, 443. *See also* Prophecy
- As a marker of identity and prestige: 24, 31–32, 40, 58, 154, 167, 236, 241, 275, 331–332, 349, 351, 366, 368, 373, 378–379, 381, 387n.55, 390, 391n.88, 392, 397, 403, 439, 452, 455
- As New Jerusalem. *See* Jerusalem:  
 Constantinople as New Jerusalem
- Sieges of and threats to 32–33, 168, 250, 251, 253, 262, 266, 274, 290, 302, 303, 305, 309, 310, 325, 327, 327–328, 356, 390, 452, 459
- Capture in 1081: 68, 297–298
- Conquest and sack in 1204 1, 2, 13, 14, 15n.64, 16n.68, 24, 25, 33, 45, 51, 52, 56n.220, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 99, 100–101, 112–113, 124n.253, 128, 131, 147–148, 170, 202, 227, 291, 302, 308, 309–310, 325, 359, 361n.103, 363, 370–384, 385, 387, 390, 391, 394, 396, 399, 403, 404, 406, 451, 452, 456, 459, 460, 460–461
- Fires 99, 115, 124n.253, 125–126, 376, 383
- Patriarch(ate). *See* Patriarch(ate) of Constantinople
- Western newcomers and  
 visitors 136n.324, 140, 142, 150–151, 154, 167, 168, 175, 196, 201, 218n.60, 224, 252, 263, 268, 315, 319, 327, 331, 339, 344, 351, 411, 412, 413, 416–417, 423, 437–439
- Western presence 58, 80, 81, 83, 91, 92–93, 95, 99, 100–101, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109–110, 112–113, 113–126, 127, 130, 136, 160, 163, 175, 178, 183, 204, 206, 213, 222n.79, 230, 233, 237, 277, 304, 376, 381, 453. *See also* Genoese, Pisans, Venetians
- Western rule 232, 382–384, 384–385, 390, 394, 395n.103, 398, 400, 402–403, 404
- Constantinopolitans 10n.36, 30, 31, 35, 40, 106–107, 115, 118n.222, 120, 122, 123, 124, 157, 160–161, 162n.118, 163, 200, 241, 300, 361, 382, 387, 396, 451, 452. *See also* Populace, Riots
- Context or relativization of portrayals 2, 3, 4, 8–9, 13, 16, 29, 30, 42, 50n.181, 51, 52, 65, 81–82, 98, 99, 100–101, 112, 145, 185–188, 245, 247, 268, 286, 292, 295–296, 297–298, 299–300, 301–302, 304, 305, 306, 307, 310, 312, 318, 324, 325, 326, 333, 340, 351, 356, 361, 363, 374, 376n.26, 382, 383, 386, 389, 391, 397, 399, 400, 411, 418, 423, 426, 427–428, 445, 449, 450–452, 453, 454, 460. *See also* Differentiation, Nuance
- Contradictions 10, 21, 41, 52, 53, 78, 118, 146, 147, 189, 249, 251–252, 253, 260, 261, 277n.166, 298n.266, 306, 309, 315, 319, 321, 338, 364n.121, 393, 435, 447, 450, 451
- Crete 76n.5, 128, 274
- Criticism of fellow Byzantines 32, 35, 46, 52, 82, 99, 102, 112, 124, 125, 127, 128, 148, 151, 174, 175–177, 179–180, 199, 216, 220, 235–236, 238–239, 240–241, 248, 275, 279, 280, 282, 284, 285, 286, 289, 290, 295, 300–301, 302, 303, 305, 334, 337,

- 352, 353–354, 356, 357n.86, 360, 361, 362, 363, 366, 368, 369, 370–371, 372, 373, 374, 377, 378, 380, 384, 387, 388, 391, 392, 393, 398–404, 426, 428, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 451, 453, 460. *See also* Exhortation, Imperial Decline, Introspection, *Kaiserkritik*, Populace
- Crossbows 320, 373
- Cruelty (topos or concept) 84, 97, 100, 249–250, 269, 274, 277, 281, 282, 295, 296, 298, 299, 302, 304, 305, 306, 307, 311, 316, 362, 363, 379, 381, 389, 394, 396, 397, 398, 402, 426
- Applied to Byzantines 115–116, 179, 295, 297–298, 305, 306, 337, 368
- Crusade of 1101 316–317, 412, 413
- Crusader polities 26, 54, 58, 137, 163n.22, 165, 171, 175, 222, 246n.7, 308, 315, 316, 322, 337, 453, 454, 455, 457. *See also* Antioch, Edessa, Holy Land, Jerusalem, Tripolis
- Crusaders 15, 28, 29, 66, 99, 100, 112, 125, 126, 168, 180, 202, 217n.53, 223, 227, 261, 262, 264, 265, 268n.125, 275, 308–338, 340, 351–357, 359, 370–384, 390, 410–413, 444–449, 451, 457, 459
- Crusades 1, 13n.53, 15, 16n.70, 32, 33, 50, 66, 67, 179, 200, 308, 324n.9, 337n.89, 447, 451, 452, 459, 460. *See also* First Crusade, Fourth Crusade, Second Crusade, Third Crusade
- Cumans 195, 210, 229, 232, 233, 247, 392, 394, 397, 398, 399, 400, 404, 451
- Cyprus/ Cypriots 54, 67, 69, 76n.5, 104, 126, 127n.271, 307, 401, 412, 422, 426, 441
- Dalmatia 84, 90, 94, 133–134, 135, 183, 188, 190, 195, 198, 368
- David (king) 147, 193n.57, 430, 431
- David Komnenos, *doux* of Thessalonike 293, 295, 301, 303, 305
- Demetrios Tornikes 65n.278, 147, 190n.42, 191
- Dénes, Hungarian commander 366, 369
- Depictions of Westerners 70, 143, 162n.118, 163, 166–167, 201
- Desecration 114n.201, 116–117, 120–121, 174, 205, 240–241, 258, 297–298, 299, 301, 303–304, 305n.297, 317, 362, 375–376, 379, 380, 384, 447
- Despot (title) 173, 182, 183, 187, 188
- Difference (markers or modalities of) 6–8, 12, 14, 25, 29, 30, 32, 40–41, 56, 66, 67, 87, 98, 100, 167, 185, 205, 225, 235n.6, 236, 241, 298n.268, 299, 304, 308, 315n.38, 345, 348, 356, 371, 373–374, 380, 390, 443, 450, 453, 454, 459, 460, 461
- Differentiation among Latins and from other non-Byzantines 51, 82n.34, 126, 264, 283, 300, 376, 380, 383, 398, 426, 451, 460. *See also* Context, Nuance
- Digenes Akrites 37, 65n.280, 155, 258n.62. *See also* Military prowess
- Diplomacy 11n.42, 12n.42, 26, 35, 70, 71, 76, 77, 82, 85, 91, 96, 98, 105, 111, 119, 122n.244, 123n.51, 127, 131, 132, 157, 158, 159n.103, 181, 182, 188, 191, 192n.52, 193, 215n.44, 222, 227, 229, 230–231, 253, 255, 265, 267, 271, 273, 280, 284, 286, 287, 290, 291, 304, 309, 313, 315n.38, 317, 322, 325, 339, 345, 347n.42, 359, 361, 368, 377–378, 408–409, 412, 414, 415, 416–417, 418, 419, 424, 432–433, 435, 439n.176, 443, 448, 456, 460. *See also* Gifts, Envoys, Media
- Distortion of primary sources in the scholarship 3, 10, 12, 13–14, 16–17, 21–22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28–29, 36, 41–42, 45, 50n.181, 51, 65, 85, 107, 108, 120, 121–122, 133, 145, 159–160, 162, 166, 186, 194, 226, 234–235, 239, 291–292, 297n.263, 298, 299–300, 303, 305, 308, 309n.7, 322n.1, 325, 354, 367, 401, 405, 406, 421, 450, 452–453, 454, 455, 459–460
- Divine retribution 14, 117, 151, 179, 199, 264, 265–266, 266, 295, 302, 306, 310, 311, 316, 318, 326–327, 351–352, 352, 361n.103, 362, 363, 366, 370n.2, 371, 372, 373, 374, 376, 378, 381–382, 382, 383, 384, 387, 389, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 398, 445, 456. *See also* Introspection
- Doge of Venice 75, 77, 78, 80, 81n.29, 90, 99, 102, 372, 377–378, 385, 394, 395n.103
- Dogs (Latins compared to) 69, 126, 376
- Dominikos, wine merchant 99–101, 237, 383
- Dositheos, patriarch of Constantinople 101, 205, 353–354, 355, 459
- Doukai (dynasty) 248n.18, 250, 254

- Dress (as marker of identities) 7, 24, 29, 151, 167, 238, 266, 298, 304, 453, 461, 462
- Duplicity (topos or concept) 103, 217n.53, 249, 251, 262, 263, 267, 273, 275, 319, 346, 372, 388, 410–411, 430, 436, 448  
 Attributed to fellow Byzantines 354, 374, 387, 402
- Dyrrachion 69–70, 78–79, 80, 81, 203–204, 226, 247, 254, 255, 258, 295, 306n.301, 359
- East (region) 1, 30n.64, 171, 247, 316, 446, 455  
 Near East 1
- Ecloga Basilicorum* 143
- Economy 1, 28n.52, 32, 75, 76n.5, 85, 97, 450, 457
- Ecumenism 4, 26–27, 30–31, 62, 137, 140, 142, 144, 147, 154, 165, 287, 308, 318, 325n.17, 329, 333, 345, 349–351, 359, 360, 362, 385n.62, 418, 421, 438, 445, 453–454. *See also* Superiority, *Zweikaiserproblem*
- Edessa 270, 324n.9, 421, 423n.103
- Education/ erudition 7, 11, 25, 26, 27n.43, 30, 31, 35, 36, 38, 40–41, 44, 48, 56, 57, 63n.266, 67, 71, 83, 87n.56, 95–96, 102, 135, 145, 165, 221–222, 225, 234–236, 238–239, 240, 252, 259, 276, 285, 292, 293, 296, 297, 302, 304, 329–330, 333, 383, 386, 453, 455, 457, 458, 459–460, 461
- Egypt 179, 267, 321  
 Campaign in 1169 435–443
- Eirene Angelina, queen of Germany 111, 363
- Eirene-Bertha of Sulzbach, Byzantine empress 15n.64, 58, 63, 144n.33, 145n.35, 146n.40, 148–159, 162, 170, 185, 187, 222, 322, 324, 415, 418, 453
- Eirene Doukaina, Byzantine empress 49n.117, 59, 139, 145, 150, 151n.63, 252, 269
- Eirene-Piroska, Byzantine empress 69, 141–145, 146, 147, 149, 153, 199
- Eirene the *σεβαστοκρατορίσσα* 59, 150, 157n.92, 187n.29, 417–418
- Embassies. *See* Envoys
- Emotions 5, 48n.174, 462
- Empresses. *See* Imperial women
- Encomia. *See* Panegyric
- Encomiastic tendencies, influences or narratives 34, 35, 47, 48n.72, 49, 77, 87n.57, 90, 130, 132n.297, 136, 137–138, 148, 155, 156, 157, 159n.106, 162, 175n.29, 181, 183, 184, 192, 197, 198, 215, 218, 246, 247, 253, 262, 273, 277, 278n.175, 279, 280, 282, 283, 285, 287, 288, 310, 314, 315, 317, 319, 327, 329, 333, 334, 336, 340, 344, 347, 349, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 409, 417, 420, 426, 428, 430, 431, 434, 435, 436, 443, 446–448, 454, 457. *See also* Omissions, Orations, Panegyric
- England or English 144, 171, 201, 202n.14, 204, 205n.34, 321, 358
- Enrico Dandolo, doge of Venice 99, 372, 377–378, 384, 385, 394, 395n.103
- Entertainment (literary) 45, 59, 65, 135, 246, 252, 258, 266, 319–320, 367, 429
- Envoys 58, 89–90, 116, 123, 130, 136, 141, 162n.118, 165, 177, 193n.60, 201n.7, 218, 219, 222, 233, 237, 250, 252, 254n.44, 258, 262, 265, 267, 273, 280, 282, 287, 290, 314, 316, 320, 322, 324, 327, 330, 341, 346, 352, 355, 359, 360, 361, 380n.45, 402, 407, 408, 412, 416, 417, 422, 427, 431, 435, 437, 441, 443  
 Papal legates 116, 296, 397
- Epic elements 47, 65n.280, 258n.62, 408n.13, 429
- Epistolography. *See* Letters
- Eschatology. *See* Apocalyptic concepts, Prophecy
- Ethnicity 8, 23n.14, 24–27, 29, 75, 200, 207, 297, 451, 454, 455, 459. *See also* Origin
- Ethnography (Byzantine) 17, 35, 83, 456
- Ethnonyms 6n.10, 36, 144–145, 458
- Euboea(ns) 87, 280, 391
- Euphrosyne, Byzantine empress 26n.34, 139, 160n.107, 364, 395
- Europe(an) 1, 2n.4, 16n.70, 28n.52, 51, 168, 271, 437
- Eustathios of Thessalonike 3, 15n.64, 45, 46, 50–51, 58, 63, 82n.34, 102–103, 105–106, 107, 107–108, 109, 113–117, 118, 131n.291, 132n.300, 133–136, 137, 149n.55, 159n.106, 160–161, 162n.118, 163, 164, 166, 167–169, 171–172, 174, 183, 184n.16, 190,

- 201n.8, 213, 221, 232, 275n.155, 279n.178,  
290n.229, 291, 292, 292–303, 304, 327,  
336, 344n.29, 361n.103, 434, 437–438,  
439–440
- Euthymios Malakes 63, 65n.278, 149
- Euthymios Tornikes 64, 203n.17, 234n.3
- Euthymios Zigabenos 52, 67
- Exhortation of fellow Byzantines 45, 128,  
177, 276, 292, 293, 295, 301, 302, 303, 337,  
361, 370, 373, 377, 384, 389, 398, 400,  
402, 403, 404, 451. *See also* Criticism of  
fellow Byzantines
- Faithlessness (topos or concept) 86, 95, 138,  
127, 213, 216–217, 262, 263–264, 265, 315,  
341, 368, 422, 436, 442. *See also* Oath-  
breaking, Perjury
- Applied to Byzantines 253, 256, 374, 399,  
401–402
- Feudalism 271, 326, 393
- Fickle relations 4, 13–14, 61, 98, 308, 325, 371,  
406, 417, 449, 452, 461
- Filioque* 68, 304n.291, 373
- First Crusade 7, 60n.240, 210n.19, 217n.53,  
246n.7, 247, 261, 263, 268, 271, 308–321,  
340, 375, 410–411, 413, 418, 451
- Flameng, Norman commander 283–285
- Flemings 376, 385, 387
- Foolhardiness (topos or concept) 204, 209,  
214, 282, 286, 330, 393, 424, 456
- Applied to Byzantines 209, 286, 425n.107
- Foreignness or Foreigners 6–9, 11, 12, 16,  
21n.3, 26n.40, 27, 28–30, 37n.103, 65,  
82n.34, 95n.92, 152n.72, 160, 186, 234,  
235n.4, 238, 241, 292, 297n.263, 305,  
401, 450, 453, 454–455. *See also* non-  
Byzantine, Strangers, Xenophobia
- Fourth Crusade 11n.42, 52, 64, 83n.37, 85, 98,  
119n.233, 122n.242, 124, 363, 370–384,  
456, 463
- France 144, 168, 171, 211, 312n.21, 326, 335n.82,  
339, 385n.65, 420, 439n.176, 457
- Franks 11n.42, 60n.240, 104, 112, 166, 167, 208,  
210n.14, 217n.53, 227, 261, 310, 313–320,  
370n.2, 389, 411
- Frederick I Barbarossa 15n.64, 31, 61n.244,  
63, 89–90, 91, 105, 129–130, 131, 132, 134,  
135, 136, 148, 152, 158, 171, 175, 180, 181,  
188, 192, 196, 280, 292, 322–323, 324,  
326, 327, 332, 334, 335, 339–357, 359,  
385n.66, 413, 414, 415–417, 436, 444–  
449, 450, 451, 457, 458, 459. *See also*  
Hohenstaufen dynasty, *Kaiserkritik*,  
*Zweikaiserproblem*
- Freedom or liberty (concept) 238–239, 240,  
249, 275, 362, 378, 399, 400
- French (people) 144, 167, 220, 282, 330–331,  
335–336, 337, 457. *See also* Franks
- As Gauls or Galatians 144
- As Germans 144, 167, 211, 220, 330
- Gafforio, Genoese pirate 111, 127–128
- Garrulousness (topos) 313
- Gender 8, 46, 48, 71, 88n.58, 110, 132–133,  
134–135, 139–140, 142, 143, 144, 146,  
148, 149, 151, 155, 156, 158, 162, 164, 165,  
166, 167n.135, 173, 174, 176, 182, 183,  
185, 202, 229, 248, 252, 259, 276, 318,  
336, 358, 361, 367, 393, 403, 425, 442,  
461, 462
- Genericism 5, 16, 17, 34–35, 49–50, 56, 59,  
60, 64, 69, 75, 83, 104, 106, 108, 122, 131,  
140, 149, 194, 195, 200, 218, 222, 234, 246,  
253, 254n.44, 276, 286, 288, 291, 293,  
294, 323, 336, 356, 365, 367, 370, 370–  
371, 380, 395n.103, 397n.109, 406, 425,  
428, 429n.129, 430, 439n.175, 455–456,  
457, 457–458. *See also* Introspection,  
Omissions, Superiority, Western  
influence
- Genoa 75, 89n.64, 91, 98, 103, 104, 105,  
107n.159, 109, 113, 119, 130, 146n.42, 146
- Genoese 71n.319, 92–93, 103–104, 105–111,  
113–120, 122, 123, 124, 127–128, 169n.146,  
221, 401
- Quarter in Constantinople 92–93, 105,  
114, 120, 124n.253, 130, 452
- Genre 21n.3, 34, 43, 50,  
60n.241, 458
- Geoffrey of Villehardouin 125n.261, 387,  
400n.117
- Georgios Kedrenos 44, 58, 59, 202n.12, 462
- Georgios Palaiologos 255, 265
- Georgios Tornikes 49, 62, 65n.278, 151n.63,  
187, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238–240, 241
- Georgios Tornikes the Younger 63

- Germans 15n.64, 61, 89, 90, 107, 132, 138, 155, 168, 171, 205, 212, 213, 252, 330, 334, 336, 340, 341, 343, 344, 350n.51, 352, 353, 354, 357, 360, 361, 417, 444, 445–446. *See also* Alamanni
- Germany (Ἀλαμανία) 111, 322, 344, 357. *See also* Holy Roman Empire
- Geza II, king of Hungary 181, 194, 195–196, 197, 342, 367, 368
- Gidoi (aristocratic dynasty) 231–232, 233  
Alexios Gidos 232  
Andronikos Gidos (perhaps identical with Andronikos I of Trebizond) 232
- Gifts (diplomatic) 70, 75, 76, 77–78, 80, 81, 105, 106, 193, 197, 210, 211, 220, 231, 265, 271, 356, 408, 409, 412, 416n.64, 422, 443, 460  
Esztergom reliquary 193n.60
- Gluttony (topos or concept) 296, 360, 376, 384, 389  
Applied to Byzantines 178, 361
- Godfrey of Bouillon 311–312, 313, 318, 321, 411, 412, 459
- Graikoi* (for Byzantines) 25n.29, 355–356, 361, 380, 387
- Grammar school (ὀρθογραφία) 221
- Greco-Roman culture or heritage 3, 12, 306, 458, 462
- Greece 23, 351, 386n.69, 389, 400
- Greed (topos) 81, 111, 129n.280, 138, 168, 217n.53, 218n.60, 219n.65, 259, 265, 272, 276, 296, 304, 311, 314, 316, 317, 347, 372, 375, 376, 377, 383, 426  
Applied to Byzantines 178, 241, 302, 361
- Greek  
Ethnonym or identity 21, 22–23, 25, 26, 30, 115n.207, 161, 355, 361, 371, 380, 463.  
*See also Graikoi*, Hellenes, Hellenism  
In a religious sense 69, 116, 371, 380, 387  
Language 3, 21, 22–23, 23–24, 28n.52, 30, 35, 70, 71, 81, 92, 133, 140, 150, 160, 166, 170, 173, 205, 212, 221, 225, 234, 235–236, 238, 240, 245, 254n.44, 271n.140, 278, 281, 284, 293, 297, 298n.268, 326, 333, 343, 349, 356, 362, 383, 387n.73, 389, 396, 398, 410, 412, 425, 454–455, 455, 458, 461
- Gregorios Antiochos 64, 160n.106, 350n.51
- Gregory VII, pope 251, 252, 309, 406–409
- Guy, brother of Bohemond I of Antioch 229, 231–232
- Hadrian IV, pope 282, 286, 290
- Hagia Sophia 88n.58, 99, 107, 143, 167n.135, 173, 174, 350, 383
- Hagiography 15n.64, 37n.108, 43n.144, 68–70, 83n.37, 127n.271, 143, 149, 307n.307, 462
- Hair (facial) 380, 453, 461, 462. *See also* Beardlessness
- Hairstyle and/or hair color 7, 32, 71, 87, 143, 162n.118, 164n.125, 172, 249, 269, 300
- Half-barbarian(s) (μιξοβάρβαρος) 30, 273, 455
- Harald III Hardrada, king of Norway 203, 235n.4
- Hauteville dynasty 218, 246–247, 250, 259, 263, 265, 266, 269, 270, 293, 410, 411, 413
- Helene-Olympias, daughter of Robert Guiscard 141, 248
- Hellas 120, 148, 280, 388, 391, 393
- Hellenes (for Byzantines) 11, 23, 25–26, 113, 160n.107, 343, 389, 454
- Hellenism 17, 21–22, 25–26, 27n.43, 34n.86, 71, 235–236, 252, 305, 379, 382, 454  
“Anti-Latin,” 17, 21, 25–26, 235–236, 252, 454
- Henry II, duke of Austria 61n.246, 154n.76, 345, 346, 414–415, 417–418
- Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor 145, 193n.59, 251, 252, 258, 259, 323, 406–410
- Henry V, Holy Roman Emperor 149, 322
- Henry VI, Holy Roman Emperor 98, 152, 191–192, 309n.8, 322, 339, 342, 357–363, 380n.45, 413
- Henry of Flanders, Latin emperor 386, 388, 389, 395n.103, 396, 397, 398, 401, 404
- Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony and Bavaria 415–416
- Henry, heir apparent to Conrad III 157n.92
- Heresy or heretics 24, 66, 140n.10, 236, 317, 373, 460
- Higher or upper strata of society 7–8, 10, 11, 21–22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 35n.91, 42–43, 60, 65, 70, 75, 77n.7, 81, 96, 147, 93n.157, 194, 206, 225, 234–236, 272, 371,

- 378–379, 386, 391–392, 403–404, 452, 454, 455. *See also* Aristocracy
- Hindsight (historiographical) 88–89, 93, 159n.106, 186, 189, 220, 248, 261, 263, 272, 285, 294, 372, 375–376, 377–378, 410–411, 413, 422, 423
- Historiographical agenda. *See* Motivations
- Historiography, medieval Western. *See* Western sources
- Hohenstaufen dynasty 152, 154n.76, 158, 168, 171, 172n.7, 322–323, 325, 329, 334, 339, 341, 346, 348, 351, 358, 413–418
- Holy Lance 264, 265, 318, 411
- Holy Land 58, 65n.284, 69, 101, 104, 105, 107n.158, 116, 161, 175, 176, 179, 180, 266, 322, 329, 332, 333, 354, 357, 358, 368, 372, 411, 412, 416, 426, 427, 428, 429–430, 431, 438, 440n.178, 447. *See also* Crusader polities, Palestine
- Holy Places 308, 422, 429, 431, 438, 443
- Holy Roman Empire 58, 90, 91, 94, 171, 251, 322, 339, 341, 406, 415. *See also* Germany
- Holy Sepulcher 69, 262, 264, 310, 321, 332, 380, 422, 430, 439, 446
- Holy War 15, 308, 337, 447
  - Civil “Holy War” in Constantinople 107, 108, 174, 298n.268
- Homer(ic) 37n.104, 47n.171, 51n.191, 95n.93, 150, 161n.116, 196, 268, 403, 408, 442, 458. *See also* *Iliad*, *Odyssey*
- Hugh, count of Vermandois 261, 311, 312, 320
- Humbert, son of Raoul 223, 228
- Humor 41, 196, 267, 295, 462. *See also* Irony, Mockery
- Hungarians 15n.64, 26, 57n.223, 107, 141–147, 181, 182, 183–184, 186, 189, 189n.36, 190, 191, 194–200, 225n.93, 227, 233, 238, 345, 349n.50, 365–369, 457, 459
  - As Dacians 141, 144
  - As Gepids 192, 193n.57
  - As Huns 144, 341, 342, 345
  - As Paionians 146, 184n.16, 188
  - As Pannonians 183n.16
- Hungary 50, 57n.223, 63, 90, 141, 145, 146, 171, 181–185, 188–189, 190n.41, 191, 193, 195–199, 211, 212, 238, 289n.222, 322, 332, 341, 345, 348, 365, 367, 368, 414, 415, 429, 426, 454, 457
- Hunting 156, 283, 425n.107, 432, 438
- Hyperbole 3, 41, 81, 88, 98, 104, 105, 111, 114, 135, 136, 149, 153n.72, 192, 209, 216, 237, 239, 251, 253, 255, 261, 277n.167, 286, 292, 299, 302, 303, 304, 306, 311, 312, 315, 327, 344, 346, 367, 373, 376n.26, 378, 379, 388, 392, 407n.12, 410, 431, 450, 451
- Identity or Identities 2, 5, 6–9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 21–32, 36–37, 39–41, 42, 64, 65, 76n.7, 187, 205, 206, 241, 370, 371, 373, 379, 452, 454, 455, 456–457, 458, 461
- Markers or pillars of 4, 7, 9, 17, 28, 30, 31, 40, 55, 87, 138, 140, 151, 154, 161, 167, 179, 205, 206, 210, 211, 214n.41, 225, 257, 266n.116, 288, 305n.296, 308, 313, 335, 369, 379, 400, 406, 443, 450, 453, 454, 458, 459–460, 461
- Ideology 5, 7, 8, 9, 10n.36, 22n.6, 24, 26, 30, 61, 82, 97, 140, 144, 193, 251, 308, 325, 329, 333, 345, 348, 349, 350, 354, 355, 359, 360, 382n.55, 400, 421, 426n.118, 427, 431, 453, 454, 459. *See also* Imperial ideology
- Ikonion
  - City 214, 445
  - Sultanate 154, 171, 233, 350n.51, 432, 439, 445
- Iliad* 47n.171, 50, 51n.191, 150, 249, 303
- Imperial decline (narrative of) 46, 52, 86, 88, 96, 111, 124n.252, 126, 127, 151, 174, 179, 186, 197, 237, 277, 289, 291, 292, 322, 337, 360, 361, 366, 379, 400–401, 421, 428, 435, 440, 445
- Imperial hierarchy 80, 193, 248, 271, 331–332, 423n.103, 431, 454
- Imperial ideology or ideal 26, 30, 61, 140, 144, 251, 308, 325, 329, 345, 348, 350, 354, 355, 359, 360, 382n.55, 400, 421, 426n.118, 431, 454, 459. *See also* Ecumenism, Superiority
- Imperial women 48n.173, 132, 139–170, 182, 187, 225, 365n.2, 455, 459. *See also* Anna-Agnes, Anna Dalassene, Eirene-Bertha, Eirene Doukaina, Eirene-Piroska, Eirene the *σεβαστοκρατόρισα*, Euphrosyne, Maria of Alania, Maria-Margaret, Maria-Xene

- Inconstancy (topos or concept) 267, 284,  
311, 314, 315, 319, 329, 348, 356, 423  
Applied to Byzantines 118n.222, 391, 399
- Innocent III, pope 64, 371, 372, 373, 375
- Insolence (topos) 94–95, 97–98, 121, 255,  
265, 266, 275n.153, 312, 313, 317, 328,  
350n.51, 384, 403, 426
- Integration 5, 27–28, 29, 55n.208, 80–81, 94,  
95, 98, 133–134, 151, 165, 181–182, 186, 187,  
194, 205, 218–233, 234, 245, 248, 271, 401,  
431, 450, 451, 453, 454, 458, 461
- Interpreters 165, 205, 222, 231n.135, 237, 297,  
334, 383n.60, 455, 462
- Introspection 3, 5, 13, 16, 17, 34–35, 52,  
59, 64, 66–67, 69, 76, 82, 98, 114, 131,  
132, 171, 175, 183, 194n.64, 196, 199,  
216n.50, 246, 289, 290, 291, 293, 294,  
297, 298, 307, 309, 324, 360, 362,  
365, 370, 371–372, 381, 395, 406, 425,  
430, 441, 450, 456–457, 463. *See also*  
Criticism of fellow Byzantines, Divine  
retribution, Encomiastic tendencies,  
Exhortation, Genericism, Imperial  
decline, *Kaiserkritik*, Motivations,  
Stratification
- Investiture controversy 406
- Ioannes II Komnenos 13n.49, 44, 47–48,  
49, 52, 54, 55, 59, 61, 62, 83n.37, 84, 86,  
87n.55, 88n.58, 91, 93, 111, 141, 142, 143,  
144, 146, 148, 150, 153n.72, 154, 194, 195,  
204, 209n.12, 211, 225, 230, 248n.17, 254,  
259, 263, 270, 273, 277, 322, 365, 367, 413,  
414, 418, 419, 420–423, 428
- Ioannes V Oxeites, patriarch of Antioch 66
- Ioannes X Kamateros, patriarch of  
Constantinople 63n.268, 370n.2
- Ioannes Axouchos 89, 132, 227,  
233n.3, 240
- Ioannes Axouchos Komnenos, usurper 202,  
203n.17
- Ioannes Dalassenos Rogerios 229–231,  
272, 424
- Ioannes Doukas, general of Manouel I, Great  
Hetaerarch 149n.49, 219, 280, 282,  
283–284, 285, 286, 430
- Ioannes Doukas, *kaisar*, general of Michael  
VII 214, 230
- Ioannes Italos 235–236
- Ioannes Kinnamos 15n.64, 31, 35, 37, 44, 45,  
49–50, 54, 83–85, 86, 87, 89–90, 91–94,  
95, 96, 100, 103, 105, 114, 129, 130–131,  
132–133, 134, 135–136, 137, 142, 148, 149,  
150, 154, 155, 155–156, 158, 161n.116, 162,  
164n.125, 165n.132, 168, 172, 181–183,  
184, 186, 188, 189, 194, 195, 196n.68, 197,  
198–199, 201, 204, 205, 209n.12, 211–212,  
218–221, 222, 223, 224, 227, 230–231, 233,  
240n.31, 272–274, 276, 277, 278, 279–  
288, 289, 290, 322–323, 324–333, 334,  
335–336, 339, 340–342, 344–351, 355,  
357, 359, 365, 366, 367–369, 413–417,  
419–421, 422–425, 425–426, 427, 428,  
429, 430–433, 433–434, 435–437, 439,  
440, 443, 447, 450, 451, 454, 457, 458
- Ioannes Mesarites 64, 370n.2
- Ioannes Renier of Montferrat 107, 164n.125,  
166, 171–175, 182, 212, 344, 439n.176
- Ioannes Skylitzes 58, 59, 201, 202n.12,  
208n.6, 214n.41, 216, 217n.53, 406n.4,  
462. *See also* Skylitzes continuation
- Ioannes Steiriones, pirate and naval  
commander 111, 127
- Ioannes Syropoulos 64
- Ioannes Tzetzes 22n.8, 40, 46n.161, 59,  
65n.278, 149–150, 325
- Ioannes Zonaras 22, 38n.117, 44, 45, 46, 55–  
56, 57, 66, 141, 144n.34, 172, 201, 202n.12,  
209n.9, 210n.15, 213n.38, 214, 215n.42,  
216–217, 237, 246, 297, 298n.266, 308n.2,  
380, 457, 462
- Irony 41n.132, 42, 48n.172, 196n.70, 267n.120,  
447, 462
- Isaakios II Angelos 45n.151, 52, 63n.266,  
98–99, 99, 101, 102, 109, 111, 119n.232, 120,  
122–123, 123, 124n.257, 125, 126, 141, 146,  
146–147, 164, 174, 175, 176, 177–178, 179,  
180, 189, 190–191, 192–193, 197n.75, 212,  
292, 305, 306–307, 350, 351, 352–356,  
357, 358, 359, 361n.103, 362, 374, 376,  
377, 378, 393, 445, 448, 449, 458, 459
- Isaakios Aaron, courtier of Manouel I 165
- Isaakios Komnenos, brother of Ioannes II,  
*sebastokratōr* 48n.173, 71n.139, 211
- Isaakios Komnenos, ruler of Cyprus 65, 67,  
126–127, 305n.298, 307, 362
- Islam 32, 132n.251. *See also* Muslims



- Italians 1, 16n.69, 29, 67, 75–138, 172–173, 176, 205, 207, 211, 212, 218, 220, 221n.78, 222, 225, 240, 245, 250, 280, 283, 286, 342, 344, 348, 385n.65, 401, 435, 453, 454, 457. *See also* Anconitans, Genoese, Lombards, Montferrat, Pisans, Venetians
- As synonym for Latins 108, 161n.116, 164n.126, 400, 425, 429
- Italy 11n.42, 26, 42, 75, 80, 84, 86, 89, 90, 97n.99, 129–137, 144, 152n.72, 158, 171, 172n.7, 173, 175, 188, 208, 211, 212, 213, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 226, 229, 230, 245, 247, 249, 250, 252, 258, 259, 260n.75, 269, 271, 272, 275n.153, 278, 279, 288, 320, 322, 324, 339, 341–348, 351, 357–358, 409, 410, 414, 415, 416, 436, 451, 454, 457. *See also* Longibardia, Normans: war of 1155–58, Northern Italy, Sicily, Southern Italy
- Ivan Asen I, tsar of Bulgaria 177, 393
- Jerusalem
- City 32, 69, 210, 251, 262, 308, 310, 316, 332n.65, 412, 420, 429–430, 441, 443
- Constantinople as New Jerusalem 429–430
- Latin conquest in 1099 321, 429
- Latin kingdom 69, 171, 182, 184n.16, 212, 316, 317n.45, 321, 357, 411, 420, 428, 430–443, 454
- Muslim occupation in 1187 67, 381
- Patriarch(ate). *See* Patriarch(ate) of Jerusalem
- Jesus Christ 29n.59, 153n.73, 180, 317, 332, 380, 381, 396, 444, 446, 448
- Jews 28n.52, 92, 298–299, 367, 453
- John, papal legate 116–117, 296
- John. *See* Ioannes
- Joscelin I, count of Edessa 317
- Joscelin II, count of Edessa 420, 421, 423n.103, 428
- Jousting 70, 161n.116, 212, 285, 429, 432, 438
- Julio-Claudian dynasty or ancestry 145, 146, 154, 164–165
- Julius Caesar 154, 462
- Kaiserkritik* 45–46, 46, 47–48, 56, 61, 62, 85, 86, 87, 98–99, 101, 112, 119n.32, 120, 124–125, 127, 133, 136, 174, 175, 176, 177–178, 179, 183, 184–186, 187–188, 188–189, 197, 198, 215, 216n.50, 234–240, 248, 254, 258, 259–260, 262, 263, 266, 270, 278, 280, 288, 289, 290–291, 291–292, 292–293, 303, 306–307, 310, 312, 314, 333, 337, 340, 351–356, 357, 359–362, 363, 366, 368, 374, 376, 377, 384, 385, 390, 412, 440, 441, 442, 443, 445, 446, 447, 451, 457. *See also* Criticism of fellow Byzantines, Imperial Decline
- Kalamanoi (aristocratic dynasty) 195
- Kaloyan, tsar of Bulgaria 213, 392–393, 394–395, 396, 399–400, 402
- Kekaumenos 27n.43, 41n.218, 203, 235n.4
- Kelts (Κέλτοι) 144, 204, 208, 209, 210n.14, 211n.22, 267, 311, 312, 313, 423, 458
- Kerkyra 56, 85, 86, 89, 95, 202n.12, 227–228, 253, 266, 273–274, 275, 277–278
- Kilij Arslan I, sultan of Ikonion 314, 319
- Kilij Arslan II, sultan of Ikonion 233, 350n.51, 432, 439, 445
- Kinship 14, 37n.103, 119, 142n.18, 144, 146, 147, 154, 160n.107, 164, 168, 171, 177, 179, 187, 192n.53, 193, 195, 223, 224–225, 230n.128, 231, 260, 331, 371, 390n.83, 420, 422, 430, 431n.141, 432, 433, 434, 450, 456, 461. *See also* Alliances, Marriage alliances
- Kighthood 3, 161, 277, 456, 459
- Knights 210, 211, 212, 224, 226, 271, 282, 295, 298, 302, 373, 388, 389, 394, 429, 442, 459. *See also* Cavalry, Jousting, Military, Military prowess
- Komnenian dynasty 1, 25, 26, 30n.64, 36, 37, 39, 48n.173, 61, 75, 106, 154, 155, 159, 160, 168, 173, 174, 207, 214, 224, 248n.18, 254, 273, 308, 322n.1, 341, 408, 413, 415, 418, 419, 422, 424, 426, 429, 438, 447, 454
- Komnenian period 1, 2, 3, 17, 21, 25, 26, 33, 39n.119, 41n.128, 43, 44, 45, 46n.161, 50, 55, 60, 62, 71n.318, 164, 181, 200, 204n.25, 205n.34, 207, 208, 209, 230, 235, 450, 458
- Komnenian “Renaissance” or “Revival” 43, 65

- Kommenian "system" or political order 1n.2, 36–37, 39, 71n.318, 159, 187, 225, 230, 237, 291, 338, 422, 438, 454
- Konstantinos I the Great 30n.64, 56n.216, 318, 350, 366
- Konstantinos VII  
(Porphyrogenetos) 59n.240, 318
- Konstantinos IX Monomachos 203, 447n.207
- Konstantinos Doukas, fiancé of Anna Komnene 141, 248, 252
- Konstantinos Kalamanos, *doux* of Cilicia 195, 428
- Konstantinos Laskaris 203
- Konstantinos Manasses 44, 45, 46n.159, 55n.212, 58, 59, 63, 65n.278, 144n.34, 145n.35, 156n.85, 162n.118, 164, 183, 350n.51, 433n.152, 462
- Konstantinos Oumpertopoulos 209–210
- Konstantinos Stilbes 15n.64, 66, 378
- Konstantinos Tornikes 402
- Kosmas II, patriarch of Constantinople 156, 277
- Ladislau I, king of Hungary 69, 142, 194
- Ladislau II, king of Hungary 194, 195–198
- Lampardai (aristocratic dynasty) 232–233  
Andronikos Lampardas 233
- Landulf (Landoulphos), *meGas doux* 104, 223, 407n.10
- Language 7, 11, 29, 30, 36, 40, 102n.126, 166, 170, 235–236, 240, 292, 296–297, 304, 305, 356, 381, 434n.155, 448n.210, 451, 454–455, 458, 461. *See also* Atticism, Greek, Interpreters, Latin, Latinisms, Literary aspects, Pronunciation, Rhetoric, Status, Stratification, Style, Translations, Vernacular, Vocabulary, Western (medieval) languages, ἄστειότης, εὐγλωττία
- Registers of 40, 297, 305
- Laodikeia (Asia Minor) 444
- Laodikeia (Syria) 262, 265n.111, 411, 412n.38
- Laskarids (dynasty) 389n.80
- Latin (language or tongue) 2n.4, 3, 22, 24n.20, 70, 71n.318, 92, 100, 165, 221, 222, 225, 231n.135, 271, 278, 281, 293, 296, 304, 305, 326, 333n.73, 343, 349, 351, 387n.71, 389, 395n.104, 425, 455, 461, 462. *See also* Latinisms, Western (medieval) languages
- Latin Empire 370n.2, 385n.62, 384–405, 459
- Latin massacre. *See* Riots of 1182
- Latin sources. *See* Western sources
- Latinisms 71, 92, 257, 278, 281, 293, 297, 326, 343, 349, 351, 387n.73, 396n.104, 455
- Latinophobia 17, 107, 120, 121–122, 162, 450, 452–453, 454. *See also* Anti-Latin attitudes or factions (alleged), Xenophobia
- Leon Sgouros 389–390, 391, 392, 401
- Leontios II, patriarch of Jerusalem 69
- Letters 50, 51n.191, 52, 62n.258, 64–65, 93–94, 147, 150, 154, 189, 190n.42, 191, 193n.60, 199, 201n.7, 210n.20, 232, 238–239, 251, 252, 257, 266n.114, 285, 287, 305, 306, 325, 328, 351, 355, 360, 374n.18, 403–404, 408–409, 418, 434n.155
- Linguistic aspects 1, 41n.128, 190n.41, 201, 429, 460, 461. *See also* Language
- Lists of Latin errors 15, 66–67
- Literacy 30, 42–43, 333, 452
- Literary aspects 1–2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 17, 25, 31, 34–35, 36–42, 43–44, 45, 46, 47, 48n.173, 49, 50, 52, 53, 58, 64, 65, 71, 76, 80, 81, 82, 91, 95, 101, 108, 116, 118n.202, 138, 140, 143, 144, 149–150, 152, 172, 176, 200, 201, 209, 222, 234, 235n.6, 240n.31, 248, 249, 260n.75, 269, 270, 274, 276, 285, 292, 299, 300, 309n.9, 310, 318, 329–330, 343, 356, 367, 377n.33, 383, 384, 393, 450–451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 458, 460, 461, 462. *See also* Genericism, Introspection, Models, Style (literary), Topoi
- Literary gatherings. *See* θέατρα
- Literary society 25, 31, 36, 37–38, 452, 456, 460
- Literati 3, 4, 8, 9, 17, 21–71, 83, 101, 102n.126, 145, 150, 162n.118, 187, 222, 234–238, 241, 292, 297, 370, 379, 391, 450, 452, 453, 455, 458, 459–460
- Lombards 92, 105, 144, 211, 221, 232, 315, 346, 385, 407n.10
- Lombardy 212, 232, 364n.121

- Longibardia 103, 220, 250, 248, 273, 288, 409, 414. *See also* Southern Italy
- Lothair III, Holy Roman Emperor 273, 322, 323, 413–414
- Louis I, count of Blois 372, 378, 394, 395
- Louis VII, king of France 168, 169, 325, 330–331, 335–337, 459
- Lower and broader strata of (Byzantine) society 7–8, 10, 23n.15, 30, 107, 160n.110, 161, 452, 462. *See also* Populace
- Macedonian dynasty 34, 271
- Maio, Sicilian admiral 290
- Manganeios Prodromos 26n.36, 61n.246, 62, 153, 154, 161n.116, 274, 277n.167, 324, 326, 326–327, 328n.40, 329, 334, 413, 416n.64, 417, 418n.75, 423, 426, 427–428, 430, 431n.141, 433, 435n.159
- Manouel I Komnenos 28n.52, 37n.106, 44, 45n.151, 47–48, 49, 54, 55, 56, 61n.246, 62, 63, 64, 69, 71n.319, 85, 99, 106, 107, 108, 109, 129–132, 133–134, 135, 137–138, 141, 142, 146–147, 149n.52, 150, 152–160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166–169, 173–175, 177, 182, 183, 184, 185–189, 198, 209n.12, 211, 212, 218, 219, 220, 221, 224, 225, 227, 228, 230, 233, 239, 254, 259, 272, 273, 274, 276–277, 279, 289–291, 293, 324, 326, 327, 329, 331, 333, 336, 338, 340, 361n.103, 365, 367, 368, 375, 390n.84, 419, 422, 425n.107, 428, 431, 445, 446, 457
- Network of alliances and kinship with Westerners. *See* Alliances
- Relations with and policies vis-à-vis Westerners 30n.64, 49, 58, 67–68, 69, 82n.34, 83–84, 85, 86–98, 99, 105, 106, 129–132, 133–134, 136, 137–138, 146–147, 148, 152, 154–155, 157, 158–159, 161, 164, 165, 167–169, 171–172, 177, 181–183, 183–184, 185–190, 192n.53, 195–199, 212, 222, 224, 231, 234–237, 239, 259, 263, 270, 273–274, 274–275, 278–290, 291–292, 294, 310, 312, 322, 324–325, 326, 327, 328–329, 330, 331–332, 334, 335–336, 337–338, 339, 340, 341–351, 355, 357, 365, 366–369, 381, 406, 414–417, 418, 420, 421n.94, 422–423, 426–443, 447, 448, 449, 454, 455, 458
- Manouel Angelos, son of Isaakios II 146n.42, 148, 388
- Manouel Boutoumites 211n.22, 250, 262, 314, 316–317
- Manuscripts 44, 45, 49, 51, 53, 59, 162n.118, 166n.135, 167, 221n.78
- Manzikert, battle of (1071) 1, 213, 214, 217, 421
- Marciana Codex 524 62, 154, 164, 165n.132, 195, 230n.128, 231, 233n.141
- Margaret of Hungary. *See* Maria-Margaret
- Margaritone, pirate leader 126–127, 128, 307
- Maria Komnene, niece of Manouel I 415
- Maria Komnene, queen of Jerusalem 435
- Maria Komnene, wife of Stephen IV of Hungary 196, 199
- Maria Komnene, *καισάρισα* 107, 109, 132, 153–154, 166, 167n.135, 171, 172, 173, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187–188, 198, 212, 238n.24, 291, 344
- Maria-Margaret, Byzantine empress 144n.33, 145n.35, 146–148, 153, 189, 388n.77, 395
- Maria (Margaret-Constance) of Antioch, Byzantine empress 106, 109, 115, 139–140, 146, 159–165, 166, 172, 173, 189, 224, 293n.240, 335, 381, 402, 419, 420, 422, 433, 440n.177, 452
- Maria of Alania 139
- Marino of Naples 222–223, 229
- Marriage alliances 3, 60–61, 135, 139–170, 171–174, 175, 177, 179, 181–182, 183–184, 185–187, 187–188, 189, 190, 192, 193, 195, 196, 198, 199, 224, 225, 226, 229, 230, 231, 248, 250, 251, 273, 291–292, 318, 324, 335, 339, 341, 344, 363, 388n.77, 409, 414–415, 416, 417–418, 419–420, 424, 430, 431n.141, 432–433, 435, 436n.162, 439n.176, 457, 460. *See also* Alliances
- Media or forms of communication 7, 27n.47, 48, 70, 167, 278, 360, 421, 454, 462. *See also* Diplomacy, Envoys, Gifts, Interpreters, Oaths, Rituals
- Mediterranean 1, 98, 103
- Melisende of Tripolis 145n.35, 164, 433
- Mentality/ Mentalities 7n.19, 9–11, 21. *See also* Attitudes

- Mercenaries 29, 87, 89, 95, 108, 112, 122, 160, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 207–217, 225, 226n.101, 240, 241, 256, 268, 279, 286, 294, 299n.271, 300, 303, 305n.297, 309, 392, 448, 453
- Merchants 28, 29, 75–128, 160, 225, 259, 383, 451, 453. *See also* Trade
- Michael I Keroularios, patriarch of Constantinople 66
- Michael III, patriarch of Constantinople 62, 145n.35, 182
- Michael IV, Byzantine emperor 203
- Michael VII Doukas 30n.64, 77, 214, 215, 216n.50, 217, 236, 248, 251, 409n.19. *See also* Pseudo-Michael VII
- Michael Attaleiates 22n.8, 35, 46, 58, 59, 214n.41, 216, 217n.53, 406n.4, 462
- Michael Choniates 15n.64, 31n.69, 63, 64, 102n.126, 113, 120, 172, 221n.78, 292, 383n.60, 389, 391
- Michael Glykas 44, 45, 55, 56–57, 201, 202n.12, 246, 462
- Michael Italikos 62, 64n.278, 82–83, 151n.63, 201n.7, 325n.17, 333–334, 420, 421, 423
- Michael of Anchialos. *See* Michael III
- Michael Palaiologos, Byzantine general 89, 132n.295, 136n.321, 211, 219, 220, 278–279, 280, 281, 283, 288
- Michael Psellos 34, 35, 41n.128, 44, 46n.159, 48, 58, 59, 140, 447n.207, 462
- Michael Sikidites. *See* Michael Glykas
- Milan 129, 130, 343, 346, 348
- Military (Byzantine) 5, 27, 86, 87, 89, 95n.92, 107–108, 112, 128, 132, 150, 174, 177–179, 181, 189, 195, 198, 201, 202, 203–204, 205, 207–214, 216, 220, 224, 226, 227, 232, 233, 235n.4, 237, 241, 253–257, 277–279, 282, 283, 286, 288, 296–298, 303, 305, 312, 317, 319n.58, 328–329, 366, 369, 373, 377–378, 389–390, 391, 419, 423, 424, 426–428, 431, 432, 434, 436, 437, 439, 441–442, 442–443, 448, 451, 453. *See also* Aristocracy, Military Prowess, Mercenaries, Navy
- Military (Western) 31, 32–33, 77, 78, 87, 89, 109, 120–121, 133, 136, 174, 177–179, 214, 251–252, 253–255, 256–258, 261, 266, 267, 269, 273–274, 277, 282, 283, 284–285, 294–295, 296, 298, 299, 302, 303, 304–305, 311, 312, 314, 315, 315–316, 320, 324, 325–326, 328–329, 330, 336–337, 343, 346–347, 351, 353, 354, 356–357, 359, 366, 369, 373, 374, 378, 387, 391, 393–394, 395–400, 404, 413, 423, 431, 434, 439, 441–442, 445–446, 450, 451, 459. *See also* Cavalry, Knights, Mercenaries, Military Prowess, Navy
- Military prowess 3, 37, 39, 70–71, 88n.58, 99, 109, 112, 134, 135, 140, 147, 154, 155, 161, 162, 167, 174, 175, 177–178, 179, 180, 202, 204, 208, 209, 211–212, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217, 224, 226, 227, 229, 232, 240, 246, 247, 248, 252, 255, 257–258, 259, 260–261, 266, 268, 274, 276, 277, 278, 283, 284, 285, 286, 288, 295, 301, 302, 305, 312, 313, 314, 315, 318, 319, 330, 337, 341, 350n.51, 361, 367, 368, 369, 373, 377, 386, 388, 395, 397, 399, 400, 404, 408, 419–420, 423, 424–425, 427, 429, 436, 442, 448, 458, 459, 461. *See also* Cavalry, Jousting, Knights
- Mockery 41, 46, 61, 64, 87–88, 95, 106, 123, 166, 195n.66, 196, 251, 252–253, 267, 269, 276, 277, 285, 289, 295, 296, 302, 305, 306–307, 320, 328, 329, 331, 353, 355, 359, 387, 397, 423, 442, 447, 454, 462. *See also* Humor, Irony
- Models (literary) 34, 41, 42, 270, 330, 379, 458
- Montferrat (margravate) 108, 146n.42, 172, 176, 177, 339, 364, 439n.176
- Mosque (in Constantinople) 28, 124n.253, 125
- Motivations behind Byzantine literature 2, 25, 33, 35, 45–46, 58, 66–67, 79, 83, 85, 86, 91, 92, 117, 120, 137, 228, 236, 238, 246, 252, 253, 257, 261, 264, 270, 271, 273, 277, 279, 280, 288, 289, 292–293, 296, 302, 304, 310, 311, 312, 315–316, 321, 333, 367, 369, 370, 371–372, 407, 410, 417, 434n.155, 445, 450, 451, 456, 457, 458. *See also* Criticism of fellow Byzantines, Education, Encomiastic tendencies, Entertainment, Exhortation, Genericism, Hindsight, Imperial Decline,

- Introspection, *Kaiserkritik*, Literary Aspects, Patronage, Stratification, Superiority, Threat
- Mounting tension hypothesis 3–4, 13–14, 16–17, 33–34, 308, 354, 381, 406, 450, 452
- Muslims 3, 27, 49, 76n.5, 125, 133, 157, 180, 189, 192n.55, 193, 209, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215n.44, 229, 234n.3, 246, 247, 254, 255, 264, 268, 285, 309, 310, 311, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317–318, 319, 326, 329, 330, 332, 336, 337, 357, 376, 381, 401, 412, 418, 421, 424, 427, 428, 434, 438, 439, 442, 443, 445–446, 447, 457, 460
- As barbarians in confrontations with  
 Latins 215n.44, 264, 310, 315, 317–318, 330, 332, 336, 439, 442, 460
- Quarter in Constantinople  
 (Μιτάτον) 376
- Myra 50, 82
- Myriokephalon (battle of 1176) 212, 224, 351, 355, 360, 439
- Nation, Nation state, Nationalism,  
 Nationality 8, 11, 23, 24–25, 27, 29, 31n.65, 186, 226n.98, 455. *See also* Ethnicity
- Navies (Western) 75, 76–79, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 96, 104, 105, 106, 109–110, 112, 117, 118, 119, 123, 126–128, 132, 136, 207, 253, 255, 269, 274–275, 276, 280, 288, 289, 290, 302, 306, 307, 336, 358, 359, 373, 395, 435. *See also* Genoese, Normans, Pisans, Venetians
- Navy (Byzantine) 75, 85–86, 90, 104–105, 109–110, 111, 126, 127–128, 207, 223, 274, 307, 336, 369, 435, 437, 439, 440, 441, 443
- Negative image of and/or attitudes toward  
 Latins (alleged) 3, 16–17, 29–30, 41, 52, 65, 98, 101, 133, 159–160, 235–236, 238, 276, 325, 327, 354, 426, 427–428, 450–452, 459–460. *See also* Anti-Latin Attitudes or Factions (alleged), Latinophobia, Xenophobia
- Neophytos the Recluse 67, 69
- New Rome (Romania as) 31, 147, 154, 164n.126, 326, 418
- Nicaea  
 Byzantine polity 45n.151, 52, 70n.316, 232, 374n.18, 378, 381, 382n.55, 392, 401, 403  
 City 52, 297, 314, 318, 319, 364n.121, 374, 403
- Nicholas II, pope 250
- Nikephoros III Botaneiates 201n.10, 208, 216n.50, 217, 248n.16, 253, 409n.19
- Nikephoros Basilakes 62, 65n.278, 421n.91, 421n.91, 423n.103
- Nikephoros Bryennios 22n.8, 45n.153, 46, 48, 49n.177, 59, 95n.92, 141, 200n.5, 201n.12, 204, 205, 208, 213n.38, 214n.41, 215, 216n.47, 217, 230, 256n.55, 270, 317, 406n.4
- Nikephoros Bryennios, rebel 208, 217
- Nikephoros Chalouphes 89–90, 276, 347–348
- Nikephoros Chrysoberges 25n.34, 63, 65n.278, 160n.107, 203n.17
- Niketas Choniates 3, 25, 33, 38n.117, 39–40, 41n.128, 44, 51, 53, 54, 56, 100–101, 125–126, 370, 374n.18, 383
- Historical work (ιστορία or χρονική διήγησις) 2, 15n.64, 25, 35, 37n.103, 44, 45, 46, 49n.177, 51–52, 53–54, 85–90, 90, 91, 92n.76, 93n.82, 94–101, 102, 103, 105–112, 113, 114, 116, 117–120, 121–138, 139, 142, 146, 147–148, 148–149, 150, 151–152, 156, 157–158, 159–163, 165, 166, 167n.135, 171–180, 183, 184–192, 193n.57, 194, 195–198, 199, 201, 202, 203, 205, 207n.4, 209n.12, 211, 212–213, 218, 221, 223, 224, 227, 228, 229–230, 232, 233, 234–235, 236–238, 239, 241, 272, 274–279, 281n.189, 286–287, 288–292, 293n.240, 299–307, 322, 324, 325, 327, 332, 333–335, 336–338, 339–340, 341, 342, 343–344, 346, 351–367, 368, 369, 370–405, 413, 414, 415, 416, 418n.77, 420, 421, 422, 423n.101, 425, 428–429, 432–433, 434–435, 435–436, 439, 440–447, 448, 449, 451, 452, 454, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 460–461. *See also* Imperial decline (narrative of)
- Letters 52–53, 374n.18
- Orations 52–53, 61, 63, 145n.35, 146, 147, 153, 164–165, 184n.16, 192–193, 374n.18, 447–448, 450, 454

- Niketas Choniates (*cont.*)  
 Versions of the history 52, 54, 101, 117,  
 127, 149n.50, 158n.95, 174, 175, 176, 188,  
 191n.50, 289n.222, 353n.68, 360, 361, 374,  
 386, 388nn.78–79, 402n.128  
 Πανοπλία δογματική 15n.64, 52–53,  
 56n.220, 67, 304n.291, 373–374
- Niketas of Nikomedeia 68n.300
- Niketas Seides 68
- Nikolaos III Grammatikos, patriarch of  
 Constantinople 69
- Nikolaos Kallikles 62, 143, 229
- Nikolaos Kataskepenos 68n.304
- Nikolaos Mesarites 15n.64, 58, 64, 201n.12,  
 202–203, 205–206, 240–241, 356n.79,  
 370n.2, 379
- Nikolaos of Methone 68n.304
- Nobility (of birth) 32, 36–37, 39, 40, 91, 140,  
 143, 145n.35, 147, 148–149, 153, 154, 164,  
 172, 179, 180, 195n.66, 196, 203, 208, 216,  
 218n.60, 224, 225, 227, 235n.4, 236, 240,  
 248, 249, 253, 257, 261, 313, 318, 320,  
 336, 369, 372, 381, 399–400, 415, 418,  
 427–428, 446, 458, 459, 461. *See also*  
 Aristocracy, Knights, Military prowess,  
 Upper social strata
- Non-Byzantine 3, 12, 22, 27n.47, 29, 33,  
 34–35, 41, 56, 58, 59n.240, 60, 61, 62,  
 64, 65, 70, 75, 81, 86, 97, 101, 102, 103,  
 106–107, 142n.18, 147, 150, 153n.72,  
 158, 167, 175, 181, 182, 186, 194, 197,  
 200, 202n.16, 204, 205–206, 207,  
 218, 222n.79, 226, 234, 235, 236, 237,  
 241, 269, 284, 296, 336, 356, 380,  
 384, 386, 430, 442, 448, 451, 453, 455,  
 456, 458, 460. *See also* Barbarians,  
 Foreignness, Outsiders, Strangers,  
 Xenophobia
- Non-Byzantine sources (Arabic, Armenian,  
 Syriac) 69, 70, 207, 311, 321, 430n.139.  
*See also* Western sources
- Normandy 249, 311n.18, 321, 411
- Normans 1, 11n.42, 59n.240, 62, 67, 84,  
 96n.97, 144, 165, 171, 187n.29, 201, 208–  
 209, 213–217, 218–221, 224, 226, 228–233,  
 245–307, 310, 311, 315, 321, 322, 365, 410,  
 411, 412, 414, 418, 451, 453, 457. *See also*  
 Antioch, Bohemond I, Bohemond III,  
 Franks, Kelts, Robert Guiscard, Roger  
 II, Sicilians, Sicily, William I, William  
 II, Tancred
- As mercenaries (mercenary character of  
 Norman society) 208–209, 212, 225,  
 226, 256
- Nautical imagery 275
- War of 1081–85 60n.240, 62, 77, 78,  
 79, 80, 81, 94, 207, 209, 226, 228, 245,  
 246n.7, 247, 250–260, 260–261, 262,  
 264, 310, 407, 408, 409, 410
- War of 1107–8 82, 142, 209, 226, 245,  
 246n.7, 247, 256, 264–265, 266–267,  
 268–269, 270–271
- War of 1147–49 86, 88, 89, 227, 245, 272,  
 273–278, 335, 342
- War of 1155–58 89, 218, 245, 272, 274,  
 278–291, 339, 341, 416
- War of 1185–87 83n.37, 126, 204, 245,  
 291, 292–307, 342, 358. *See also*  
 Thessalonike: capture of 1185
- Northern Italy 212, 221, 287
- Novels 26, 35n.95, 43, 65, 71, 455
- Nuance 14n.55, 16, 51, 66, 68, 82, 282, 292,  
 294, 295, 301, 302, 303, 311, 370n.2, 376,  
 377, 383, 389, 391, 399, 450, 462. *See also*  
 Context, Differentiation
- Nur ad-Din 428, 433, 434, 439
- Oath-breaking or violation of  
 agreements 98, 99, 182, 217n.53, 263,  
 265n.111, 267, 270, 311, 315, 316, 319, 352,  
 365, 367, 368, 380, 397, 428, 445. *See*  
*also* Faithlessness, Perjury
- Oaths 7, 28n.52, 109, 129, 132, 147, 184, 185,  
 186, 188, 189, 200, 210, 217n.53, 223, 247,  
 251, 265, 267, 270, 271, 312, 313, 314, 315,  
 316, 319, 320, 323, 324, 336, 341, 352,  
 356, 364n.121, 365, 367, 368, 380, 383,  
 397, 409, 412, 413, 414, 427, 428, 431,  
 435, 437
- Odo Frangipane 135n.314
- Odysseus 104, 263
- Odyssey* 50, 51n.191, 95n.93, 172n.9, 196,  
 197n.72. *See also* Homer
- Old Rome 154n.77, 286, 326, 349, 350,  
 351, 418
- Old Testament 327

- Olympias. *See* Helene-Olympias
- Omens 150, 151n.62, 254, 259, 268, 278, 301, 310, 334, 335, 366, 420, 435. *See also* Prophecy
- Omissions (in primary sources) 48n.172, 54, 55, 76, 77, 80, 84, 85, 87n.57, 90, 94, 96, 98, 103, 113, 117, 118, 123–124, 139, 141, 149, 158, 164n.125, 166, 184, 188, 190, 192, 196, 197, 201, 218, 221, 223, 224, 229–230, 246, 250, 261, 266, 278n.175, 286, 288, 294, 300, 309, 312, 314, 315, 316, 322, 335, 341, 348, 350, 355, 359, 365, 366, 371–372, 375, 380, 383n.60, 391, 406, 407n.4, 414, 415, 416, 419, 421, 422, 433, 434, 436, 437, 456. *See also* Genericism, Motivations
- Orations 15n.64, 27n.43, 34, 43, 44n.151, 49, 50, 51, 52, 60–64, 82n.34, 102, 106, 131, 132n.300, 133–135, 136, 137n.327, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151n.63, 152–154, 155n.83, 156n.85, 90, 97, 157, 159n.106, 160n.107, 162n.118, 164, 167–169, 175, 176, 179, 182, 183–184, 187, 192–193, 197n.75, 201n.8, 203n.21, 235n.4, 327, 344n.29, 350n.51, 359, 361n.103, 374n.18, 381, 417–418, 434, 437–438, 440, 444, 447–448, 450, 462. *See also* Panegyric, Poetry, Rhetoric
- Origin 3, 7n.18, 12, 28, 29, 32n.75, 39, 56, 75, 95, 101, 103, 104, 107, 109, 119, 125n.260, 134, 139, 140, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 150, 153, 158, 159–160, 161–162, 163, 164n.126, 166, 169, 172–173, 186, 187, 200n.2, 207, 208, 222n.81, 225, 226, 227, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 241, 248, 249, 250, 271, 283, 294, 296, 297, 301, 313, 318, 354, 365n.2, 367, 391, 401, 403, 452, 453, 454, 455, 459. *See also* Ethnicity
- Losing thought of 134, 143–144, 147, 153, 169–170, 187, 196–197
- Orthodoxy 22n.6, 23, 24, 28n.50, 373, 460. *See also* Religion
- Outsiders (in Byzantine society) 8n.26, 25, 27n.47, 29, 32, 40n.122, 187–188, 205, 236, 239, 454, 455
- Paganism or Pagans 29, 32, 193, 268, 271, 319
- Palestine 179, 212, 324, 332, 352, 353, 358, 359, 381, 416, 429, 430, 432, 433, 435, 436, 439, 440, 441, 442, 446, 447. *See also* Jerusalem: Latin kingdom
- Palestinians (Latins of Jerusalem) 427, 436
- Panegyric (imperial) 15n.64, 37, 44, 48, 50, 60–64, 130, 131, 134, 138, 142, 147, 148, 154, 161, 162, 175, 176, 179, 192, 196, 203n.17, 254, 277, 284, 288, 324, 327, 333, 338, 349, 363n.117, 365, 367, 413, 417–418, 420, 421, 422, 423, 425, 426, 428, 436, 437–438, 451, 454, 457. *See also* Encomiastic tendencies, Orations, Poetry
- Pantokrator monastery 142, 143
- Pantokrator Typikon 48n.173, 142
- Papacy/Popes 64, 66, 68, 116, 137, 147, 158, 168, 189, 190n.42, 191, 218n.60, 250, 251, 252, 268, 272–273, 282, 286, 290, 296, 309–310, 317, 323, 332, 339, 342, 343, 345–346, 347, 349, 350, 351, 358, 371, 372, 373, 375, 397, 406–409, 419, 426, 454, 460
- Paphlagonians 113, 115
- Parody 39n.119, 448n.210
- Paschal II, pope 268, 323
- Patmos 69, 127n.271, 307n.307
- Patriarch(ate) of Antioch 66, 68, 270, 418, 419, 426, 427, 431, 434
- Patriarch(ate) of Constantinople 12n.42, 41, 50, 60, 62, 63n.268, 64n.275, 66, 68, 69, 70, 101, 107, 108–109, 156, 173, 180, 182, 205, 270, 277, 286, 353–354, 370n.2, 397, 408, 459
- Patriarch(ate) of Grado 80, 81n.29
- Patriarch(ate) of Jerusalem 68, 69, 101, 354
- Patronage or Patrons 27, 36, 37–39, 45, 49, 61, 67, 69, 140, 149, 150, 157, 166, 229, 231, 233n.141, 236, 240, 350, 429, 430, 440n.178, 450, 453, 456, 458
- Paul the Roman 223
- Peace of Venice (1177) 168, 171, 350, 351
- Pechenegs 95n.92, 204n.26, 208n.6, 209, 211n.21, 214, 229, 247, 268
- Peloponnese 148, 388, 393, 398
- People's crusade 309, 310, 311
- Performance (of Byzantine literature) 37–38, 41, 42–43. *See also* θέατρα
- Perjury (topos or concept) 263, 267, 316, 368, 411, 412, 448. *See also* Faithlessness, Oath-breaking
- Applied to Byzantines 180, 302

- Persians. *See* Turks
- Peter II of Bulgaria 177, 393
- Peter of Bracheux 378, 388, 389, 397
- Peter the Hermit 262, 309, 310, 311, 318
- Petraliphai (aristocratic dynasty) 187n.29, 225–228, 233
- Alexios Petraliphas 227
- Ioannes Petraliphas 227
- Konstantinos Petraliphas 227
- Nikephoros Petraliphas 227
- Petros III, patriarch of Antioch 66
- Petros Aliphas, dynastic founder 223, 257
- Petros of Bulgaria. *See* Peter II
- Philip II Augustus, king of France 83n.37
- Philip of Swabia, king of Germany 363–364
- Philippa of Antioch 161n.116, 195n.66, 224
- Philippoupolis 193n.57, 333, 352, 353, 355, 399
- Pilgrimage 29, 210
- Piracy or Pirates 65n.281, 84–85, 93, 98, 105, 117, 119, 123–124, 126–128, 276, 278, 290, 296, 300n.271, 302, 307, 342, 396, 401, 426, 459
- Piroska. *See* Eirene-Piroska
- Pisa 75, 89n.64, 91, 98, 103–104, 107n.159, 109–110, 111, 113, 119, 124, 125, 130, 146n.42, 221, 401
- Pisans 98–99, 99, 103–128, 221, 262, 376, 381, 401, 451
- Quarter in Constantinople 114, 124n.253, 120, 130, 452
- Pluralism 8, 28
- Poetry 15n.64, 43, 47, 49n.177, 56–57, 58, 61–62, 123, 143–145, 147, 148n.49, 152n.66, 153, 154, 159n.106, 161n.116, 164, 165n.132, 166, 169, 195, 202n.12, 229, 230n.128, 231, 274, 290n.229, 324, 326–327, 328n.40, 334, 413, 416n.64, 417–418, 420n.88, 423, 425n.108, 426, 427–428, 430, 431n.141, 433, 435n.159
- Pons, count of Tripolis 412, 420
- Populace or common people 7, 10, 24, 30n.64, 35n.91, 39, 84, 102, 106–107, 107–108, 108, 112, 114, 117, 118, 121–122, 123–124, 161, 163, 240, 297, 300–301, 305, 374, 376, 379, 402, 451, 452, 461. *See also* Constantinopolitans, Lower social strata
- Poupakes 227, 277
- Primacy issue (between Rome and Constantinople) 68, 346, 408
- Privileges for Italians 75, 76, 77, 78n.15, 80–81, 83, 84, 86, 90–91, 96, 98, 99, 101, 105, 107n.159, 119, 122n.244, 124, 136, 146n.42, 435
- Pro-Latin attitudes or factions (alleged) 107–109, 159–161, 166, 239, 450
- Pronoia* (πρόνοια) 237n.19, 271n.142
- Pronunciation 7, 234, 235, 236, 453, 455
- Propaganda 26, 50, 61, 62, 87, 88, 90, 91, 95, 96, 107, 109, 110, 115, 120, 126, 131, 160, 161, 163, 164, 168, 175, 268, 278, 287, 297, 324, 325, 326–327, 334, 335, 338, 342, 348, 351, 378, 391, 397, 438–439, 454, 456
- Prophecy 32–33, 69, 150–151, 251, 268, 308, 309–310, 325, 353–354, 366, 390–391, 429–430, 447n.205, 459
- Columns in Constantinople 390
- Providence 33, 370, 392
- Provincials 26, 27, 30, 31–32, 35n.91, 56, 58, 103, 205–206, 236, 241, 291, 352, 370, 391, 392, 396, 403, 451, 454, 461
- Proximity (cultural and/or religious) 3, 5, 6, 8, 59n.240, 88, 91, 93, 95, 97, 100–101, 105, 112, 124, 125, 131, 138, 172, 182, 196, 205, 229, 245, 249, 270, 276, 277, 281, 301–302, 304, 306, 319, 368, 383, 384, 385, 386, 393, 401, 405, 406, 408, 415, 427–428, 433, 440, 443, 446–447, 453, 454, 458, 460, 461. *See also* Beauty, Christianity, Christian fraternity, Greco-Roman heritage, Identity, Military prowess, Nobility (of birth)
- Ptochoprodromos 92
- Raiktor. *See* Pseudo-Michael VII
- Raoul (aristocratic dynasty) 225, 228, 231
- Konstantinos Raoul 228
- Manouel Raoul 228n.116
- Niketas Raoul 228n.116
- Raoul (founder of dynasty) 223, 231, 252
- Raoul (crusader) 312
- Raymond II, count of Tripolis 420
- Raymond III, count of Tripolis 433n.152



- Raymond of Poitiers, prince of Antioch 161–162, 164n.125, 419–425, 426, 434, 450, 451, 459
- Raymond of Saint-Gilles, count of  
Toulouse 263, 265n.111, 267, 315, 317, 318, 319, 410–413, 451, 459
- Raynald of Châtillon 212, 424, 425–429, 430, 431–432, 433, 434
- Realpolitik 5, 31, 88, 134, 165, 263, 314, 325, 333, 348, 391, 428, 454
- Rebaptism 140
- Relativization. *See* Context
- Relics 70, 82, 83n.37, 84, 193n.60, 265, 276, 336, 409, 439, 460. *See also* Diplomacy, Gifts, Media
- Religion 7, 8, 11n.42, 12, 15, 16n.69, 24, 25n.29, 26, 28, 29, 30, 43, 56, 59n.240, 60, 64, 65–70, 114, 143, 191, 221, 222, 231, 255, 256, 257, 264, 276, 298n.268, 299, 301, 304, 306, 309, 316, 317–318, 320, 327, 331, 332, 337, 367, 371, 373–374, 380, 381, 383, 396, 408–409, 411, 427, 445, 447, 450, 453, 454, 458, 460, 461, 463. *See also* Christianity, Christian fraternity, Church, Muslims, Theology
- Renaming 140, 145, 146, 148, 159, 160, 166, 172, 182, 183, 188, 248
- Renier. *See* Ioannes-Renier
- Rhetoric 1, 3, 7n.19, 8, 26n.40, 37, 39n.119, 40, 41–42, 48n.174, 50, 52, 53, 60, 61, 62, 63, 82n.34, 89, 98, 199n.232, 144, 146, 149, 160n.107, 234–235, 237, 257–258, 261, 293n.241, 297, 303, 304, 367, 388n.78, 450, 451, 451–452, 454, 455, 461
- Rhine 144
- Rhodes 84, 123, 212
- Richard I, king of England 201, 358
- Richard of Andria 220, 281, 282, 283
- Richard of the Principate 223
- Richard, count of Acerra 293, 297, 298, 300, 303, 304, 306–307, 362
- Riots of 1182 17, 99, 103, 107, 108, 109n.171, 113–120, 121, 122, 124, 128, 161, 178n.42, 294, 296, 301, 302, 303, 440n.177, 452
- Riots of 1187 17, 99, 120–123, 452
- Riots of 1203 17, 99, 124–126, 376, 379, 452
- Rituals 7, 71, 140, 204, 331–332, 336, 346, 351, 366, 368, 385, 421, 426–427, 427–428, 429, 430, 431–432, 435n.159, 462. *See also* Ceremonial, Oaths, Jousting
- Rivalry (Byzantine-Western) 4, 31, 152, 251, 324, 326, 327, 335, 339, 340, 341, 343, 345–351, 359, 415, 429, 445, 451, 458. *See also* *Zweikaiserproblem*
- Robert I, count of Flanders 210
- Robert II, count of Flanders 318, 321
- Robert II, duke of Normandy 321, 411
- Robert Crispin 213, 217, 224
- Robert Guiscard 60n.240, 69–70, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 141, 164n.125, 203, 207, 208, 213, 226, 228, 229, 231, 245–260, 261, 264, 265, 266, 270, 272, 315, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 459
- Robert of Bassonville 218–221, 274, 280
- Robert of Loritello 252, 260
- Robert, prince of Capua 218n.60, 230, 272
- Roger II, king of Sicily 85, 86, 89, 132, 218, 219, 227, 253, 270, 271–279, 280, 281, 287, 290, 293, 322, 335, 337, 414
- Roger III, co-king of Sicily 363
- Roger Borsa 250, 252, 260, 409
- Roger(ios), dynastic founder 187, 223, 229  
Dagobert, father of Roger 223, 228, 231n.135
- Rogerioi (aristocratic dynasty) 225, 228–231, 233. *See also* Ioannes Dalassenos
- Rogerios  
Alexios Rogerios 229  
Andronikos Rogerios 231  
Leon Rogerios 231n.135
- Roman Empire (ancient) 3, 22, 23, 27, 28, 144, 200n.6, 235, 379
- Roman identity. *See* Identity, Ῥωμαισσὴν
- Roman Republic 22, 55, 237
- Romances. *See* Novels
- Roman-haters (μισορῳμαῖοι) 173n.278, 300, 304, 375, 460. *See also* Anger
- Romania (term) 23
- Romanos IV Diogenes 213, 216–217, 421
- Rome (city) 116, 201n.7, 229, 282, 286, 323, 343, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 358
- Romulus, legendary founder of Rome 22
- Roussel de Bailleul 213–217, 224, 230
- Rudolf of Rheinfelden, German anti-king 145, 407–408

- Sacred Arsenal 67–68, 350–351, 463n.8  
 Sacrilege. *See* Desecration  
 Saladin 123, 175, 180, 354–355  
 Saracens 179, 300, 354–355, 380, 425n.107, 443. *See also* Crusades, Muslims  
 Satire 39n.119, 41n.132. *See also* Humor, Irony, Mockery, Parody  
 Satrapy or Satraps (terminology) 157, 193n.57, 197, 423n.103  
 Scandinavia or Scandinavians 200–206, 312n.25. *See also* Varangians  
 Schism of 1159–77 (Alexandrine Schism) 339, 347. *See also* Peace of Venice  
 Schism or events of 1054 66  
 Schismatics 66, 317, 460  
 Scythians 95n.92, 195, 267, 268, 392, 394, 458. *See also* Cumans, Pechenegs  
 Seals 70, 71, 99n.109, 195n.66, 205n.34, 210, 214, 222, 228n.116, 228n.118, 230, 231, 232n.139, 233n.141, 463  
 Second Crusade 85, 158, 168, 169, 218, 272, 273, 274, 310, 312, 322–338, 339, 340, 344, 351, 352n.61, 423, 449, 457  
 Segregation 8, 92  
 Seljuks. *See* Turks  
 Selymbria 384, 394, 400  
 Senate or Senators 77, 155, 162, 293n.240, 298n.266, 361, 384, 403  
 Serbia 147, 182, 190n.42, 191, 454  
 Serbs 144, 189n.36, 190, 197n.75  
 Sergios Kolybas 63, 363n.117  
 Serrai (battle at) 395  
 Servility (topos or concept) 239–240, 306, 349, 427  
     Applied to Byzantines 84, 275n.156, 300, 361, 400, 403  
 Sicilians 50, 63, 96, 98, 100, 102, 114, 116, 117, 144, 190, 219, 220, 274–275, 291–307, 335, 336, 353, 358, 362. *See also* Normans  
 Sicily 89, 90, 96, 97, 116, 119, 126, 134, 135, 146n.42, 165, 171, 188, 191, 211, 212, 218, 219, 245, 270, 271, 273, 278, 279n.178, 290, 291, 293, 294, 307, 335, 339, 358, 362, 363, 417, 418, 454  
 Sigillography. *See* Seals  
 Sikelgaita (Gaita), wife of Robert Guiscard 250, 252  
 Siphantos, pirate leader 117, 296  
 Sirmion 190, 193n.57, 195, 198, 199, 368  
 Skin color 87–88, 151n.63, 162n.118, 164n.125, 248–249, 269. *See also* Beauty  
 Skylitzes continuation 59, 201, 202n.12, 208n.6, 214n.41, 216, 217n.53, 406n.4  
 Slavery 240, 275n.156  
 Snobbery 40  
 Social mobility 27–28, 221, 225  
 Status (social), rank, or prestige 7, 25, 29–30, 32, 35, 37, 40–41, 46, 48n.173, 52, 59n.240, 71, 77, 87, 92, 97, 102, 103, 123, 137, 140, 151, 154n.76, 167, 175, 182, 183, 187, 188, 189n.36, 196, 204, 205, 224, 226, 229, 230, 231, 234–241, 248, 252, 291–292, 297, 305, 312n.21, 317n.47, 366, 378–379, 381, 384, 391n.88, 403, 417, 453, 454–455, 456, 458, 459. *See also* Stratification, Superiority, τράξις  
 Southern Italy 11n.42, 80, 84, 89, 132, 158, 208, 213, 218, 221, 223, 230, 245, 247, 249, 250, 252, 260, 269, 272, 273, 275n.153, 278, 279–291, 320, 322, 324, 339, 341, 409, 414, 416. *See also* Apulia, Calabria, Longibardia  
 Speeches 37n.108, 60, 90, 120, 155, 174, 203, 215, 238, 241, 255, 258, 259, 336–337, 348, 366, 422, 442  
 Statues 366, 379, 399, 402–403  
 Staufers. *See* Hohenstaufen dynasty  
 Stephen II, king of Hungary 194  
 Stephen III, king of Hungary 182n.4, 186n.27, 188, 195, 198, 199, 345, 367, 368, 415  
 Stephen IV, king of Hungary 15n.64, 182n.4, 194, 195–199, 365  
 Stephen Nemanja, Grand Prince of Serbia 190, 201  
 Stephen, count of Blois 321, 411  
 Stereotypes 8, 463. *See* Topoi  
 Strangers 6, 12, 28–30, 121n.241, 145, 152n.72, 160, 328, 454–455. *See also* Foreignness, Non-Byzantine, Xenophobia  
 Stratification (social) 6, 8, 10, 14, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36–37, 38, 39–40, 40–41, 42–43, 46, 55, 65, 70, 81–82, 82–83, 87, 95–96, 102, 139–140, 187, 198n.78, 219n.65, 225, 234–241, 252, 291–292, 292, 297, 305, 336, 366,

- 378–379, 384, 391–392, 403–404, 451, 452, 454, 455, 456, 458, 459–460, 461. *See also* Aristocracy, Higher social strata, Lower social strata, Populace, Superiority, τᾶξις
- Stubbornness or inflexibility (topos or concept) 91, 152, 156, 199, 241, 265, 266, 306n.301, 312, 315, 328, 330, 379, 423n.103, 425n.110
- Applied to Byzantines 185
- Style (literary) 11, 34n.85, 40, 42, 46, 53. *See also* Language
- Superiority, representation and attitudes of 3, 8, 26, 28, 30, 32, 60–61, 65, 70–71, 77–78, 80–81, 87, 93, 102, 112, 139, 140, 142, 146, 147, 152, 153, 154, 167, 168, 169, 170, 172, 174, 176, 181, 183–184, 189n.36, 193, 196–197, 206, 219, 222, 235, 238–239, 241, 248, 258, 265, 273, 297, 313, 326, 327, 331–332, 336, 350, 367–368, 371, 384–385, 400, 409, 417–418, 427, 428, 430, 431–432, 437–439, 453, 455, 456, 461
- Byzantines as God's Chosen People 26, 382n.55, 453
- Synodal edict of 1166 30n.64, 137n.327, 350
- Syria 30n.64, 59, 266, 314, 358, 381, 419, 423, 425n.107, 428, 429, 430, 432, 447
- Tancred, king of Sicily 358, 363n.118
- Tancred, prince of Galilee 245, 246n.7, 247, 248, 260n.75, 263, 264, 265, 266, 268n.124, 270, 316, 317, 410, 411, 412
- Tatikios 104, 209, 262
- Terminology. *See* Vocabulary
- Thessalonike
- City 46, 50, 51, 52, 98, 100, 102–103, 114, 116, 117, 147, 148, 213, 291–307, 322, 332, 339, 341, 359, 387, 388, 395, 414, 439, 460
- Capture of 1185 50, 98, 100, 102–103, 114, 116, 117, 213, 291–307, 439–440, 460
- Thessalonians 148, 301, 302, 304, 306, 387, 388
- Thebes 273, 276, 280, 391
- Theodora Angelina, sister of Isaakios II 175, 177, 179
- Theodora Komnene, wife of Baldwin III of Jerusalem 432
- Theodora Komnene, wife of Henry II of Austria 61n.246, 154n.76, 414, 417–418
- Theodora, lover and niece of Manouel I 152, 233
- Theodoros I Laskaris 5n.151, 52, 232, 374, 389, 399, 401
- Theodoros Balsamon 65n.278, 66, 231, 447n.205
- Theodoros Prodromos 37, 46n.161, 49n.177, 62, 64n.278, 68n.305, 143–145, 147, 148, 152n.66, 153, 154, 290n.229, 413, 418, 420n.88, 425n.108
- Theodoros Styppeiotēs 57, 184, 185, 289
- Theodoros, Norman commander 278
- Theodosios I, patriarch of Constantinople 107, 108, 173
- Theodosios Goudeles 69
- Theology 51n.191, 52, 56, 57, 60, 65–68, 301–302, 380, 460, 462, 463
- Theophylaktos Exoubitos (Great Interpreter) 222
- Theophylaktos of Achrida 37, 62, 66, 68n.300, 266n.115
- Third Crusade 33, 63, 101, 192n.53, 232, 339, 342, 350, 351–357, 358, 444–449, 459
- Thomas Morosini, Latin patriarch of Constantinople 397–398
- Thomas of Antioch, retainer of Manouel I 211–212, 285
- Thoros II, prince of Cilicia 424, 425, 433
- Thoule (island or concept) 200–201
- Thrace 331, 375, 387, 393, 399, 400, 404
- Threat (Westerners as) 31, 61, 64, 96, 97–98, 131, 134, 177, 181, 188, 191–192, 246, 249, 254, 266, 274–275, 279, 311, 322, 325–326, 335, 342–343, 346–347, 349–350, 351, 357–359, 362, 410, 450, 451, 456, 460
- Timarion 41n.132
- Topoi (literary) 3, 8, 16, 27, 38, 46, 51, 52, 58, 61, 62, 81, 82, 101, 133, 146, 152, 153, 154, 157, 165, 169, 192, 197, 219n.65, 233, 234n.3, 249, 269, 275, 277, 282, 284, 299, 307, 310, 314, 315, 317, 330, 344, 346, 347n.38, 348, 349, 376, 383, 393, 399, 407n.7, 422, 426, 427, 445, 448, 450–452, 456

- Trade 1, 40, 75, 76–77, 80, 81, 82–83, 84, 85, 91, 95, 101, 103, 113n.199, 119, 124, 127, 131n.293, 133, 138, 259, 451. *See also* Merchants
- Traditions (literary) 3, 8, 22, 41, 47, 55, 81, 82, 95, 219n.65, 237, 276, 347n.38, 349, 382, 442n.187, 453, 458. *See also* Literary aspects, Models, Topoi
- Trani 130, 281, 282
- Transcultural studies 12–13
- Translations 35, 165, 221, 222n.81, 237, 326, 455, 462
- Translators. *See* Interpreters
- Treaty of Constance (1153) 415
- Treaty of Deabolis (1108) 141, 207, 222–223, 226–227, 228, 229, 247, 262–263, 264–265, 269, 270–271
- Treaty of Thessalonike (1148/49) 332, 341, 414
- Tripolis 317n.45, 412, 420, 421, 428
- Triumphs. *See* Rituals
- Trojans 144
- Truth, approaches toward and concepts of 42, 47n.167, 293n.241
- Turks 27, 49, 76n.5, 133, 157, 187, 189, 192n.55, 209, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 225, 227, 229, 234n.3, 246, 247, 254, 255, 268, 311, 313, 314, 316, 317–318, 319, 326, 329, 330, 336, 337, 357, 401, 412, 418, 424, 428, 439, 445–446, 457. *See also* Muslims
- Typikon of the Theotokos  
Kecharitomene 49n.177
- Tyrants  
Byzantine rulers as 119n.232, 126, 166, 238, 293, 305n.298, 305n.298, 307, 359, 362–363, 448  
Latin rulers as 79, 120, 126, 218, 219, 247, 249, 251, 253, 266, 272, 273, 274, 275, 279n.178, 293, 294, 348, 359, 362–363, 401, 448
- Tyre 179, 316
- Tzachas (Turkish pirate) 76n.5, 209
- Universal rule or universalism. *See* Ecumenism
- Unleavened bread 327
- Urban II, pope 309–310, 375
- Urbanization 43, 44n.147
- Urum* (Hungarian title) 182, 198
- Varangians 112, 144, 200–206, 207, 225, 238, 453
- Vassalage or Vassals 71, 197, 254n.41, 280, 393, 431n.144, 435, 437. *See also* Client rulers, λιζιος
- Venetians 15n.64, 28n.54, 29, 75–103, 105, 107, 109, 112, 113, 122, 123, 125, 132, 133, 136, 191n.49, 204, 237, 250, 255, 269, 278n.170, 296, 304, 347, 348, 354, 372, 373, 376, 381, 383, 385, 395, 396, 397, 451
- Coup against them in 1171 83, 85, 86, 88, 88–89, 90–92, 93–96, 134, 135, 204, 237, 292, 417
- Quarrel of 1149 85–89, 96n.94
- Quarter in Constantinople 80, 83, 92, 114, 120, 122n.244, 130, 452
- Raids of the 1120s 84–85
- Venice (republic or city) 75–103, 105, 130, 134, 135, 138, 146n.42, 211, 237, 279, 292, 294, 372, 385n.65, 395n.103, 417
- Vernacular elements in Byzantine literature 41n.128, 71, 166
- Vlacho-Bulgarians 179, 191, 382
- Vlachs 191, 232, 353, 396, 397, 398, 404
- Vladislaus II, duke and king of Bohemia 332–333, 368
- Vocabulary or terminology 1n.1, 6n.10, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 22–23, 25n.29, 27, 28–30, 37n.103, 40, 71, 75, 88, 90, 92, 97, 122, 137, 142, 147, 190n.41, 197n.75, 200, 201, 211, 271, 276, 278, 284, 297, 308n.1, 317, 326, 330, 343, 349, 355–356, 368, 377n.33, 380, 387n.71, 73, 396n.104, 401, 417, 442, 446, 454–455, 458, 459–460
- Weeping 157, 159n.106, 267, 301, 319, 349, 368
- Western influence on Byzantine culture 35, 70–71, 154–155, 165, 221–222, 271, 426n.118, 429, 455–456, 458, 463. *See also* Latinisms
- Western (medieval) languages 70, 100, 113, 165, 170, 200, 222, 225, 240, 296–297, 297, 304, 383n.60, 387n.71, 453, 455, 461. *See also* Latin, Latinisms

- Western sources 3, 14, 16, 23, 32, 35, 44, 70, 71, 78, 81n.29, 84, 92, 93n.82, 99, 105, 108, 109, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 124, 129, 130, 136, 137, 154, 158, 159n.104, 161, 164, 165, 176, 189, 194n.62, 195, 198, 203, 207, 221–222, 233, 239, 246, 249, 253, 255n.46, 260, 265, 268, 279, 300n.271, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 315n.38, 321, 326, 329, 330, 330–331, 333, 335, 337, 350, 351, 354–355, 356, 357, 362–363, 370, 371, 375, 380, 385, 387, 389–390, 391, 399, 407, 411, 413, 418, 425, 426n.113, 429n.132, 437, 439, 455, 459, 462, 463. *See also* Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Robert of Clari, William of Tyre
- Anselm of Havelberg 68n.300
- Boncompagno 130
- Burgundio of Pisa 221
- Geoffrey Malaterra 78n.18
- Gesta Danorum* 201n.8
- Hugo Eterianus 221, 222n.79
- James of Venice 81n.33, 221
- Leo Tuscus 221
- Martin of Pairis 397n.109
- Moses of Bergamo 221
- Odo of Deuil 326
- Orderic Vitalis 251
- Otto of Freising 322
- Rahewin 156n.88, 416n.64
- Ralph of Caen 265
- Robert of Auxerre 115n.207
- William of Apulia 78n.18, 177, 252, 255n.46
- Wildness (topos) 87, 167, 204, 255, 265, 269, 274, 292, 295, 296, 301, 304, 307, 311, 316, 319, 327, 340, 386, 392, 397, 417. *See also* Foolhardiness
- Applied to Byzantines 306
- William I, king of Sicily 89, 211, 219, 272, 279–282, 285–286, 287–291
- William II, king of Sicily 96–97, 119, 126, 188, 220, 291–292, 293, 294–295, 303, 306–307
- William III, king of Sicily 362
- William V, marquess of Montferrat 171, 172, 343
- William Longsword 171
- William of Marchisella 133, 136, 137
- William of Tyre 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 159n.104, 161, 167, 300, 301, 315n.38, 421, 425nn. 107, 110, 430n.139, 433n.152, 437, 438, 439, 440n.180
- World chronicles 44, 55, 57, 59
- Xene (monastic imperial name) 145, 160
- Xenophobia 11, 16, 27, 65, 160n.107, 186, 234–235, 238, 292, 297n.263, 305, 401, 450, 453, 454. *See also* Anti-Latin attitudes or factions (alleged), Latinophobia, Origin
- Zara 191n.49, 380
- Zeugminon/ Zeugme 197, 199, 212, 349n.50, 366, 368
- Zweikaiserproblem* 31, 134, 145, 152, 165, 324, 325, 326, 327, 329, 332–333, 335, 339, 343, 345–346, 347–348, 348–351, 355, 358–360, 360, 418, 445, 448, 454, 458. *See also* Ecumenism, Superiority
- ἀλαζονεία. *See* Arrogance, Boastfulness
- Ἀλαμανία. *See* Holy Roman Empire
- Ἀλαμανικόν (German tax) 361–362
- ἀστειότης 39n.119, 40, 83, 206, 333, 455. *See also* Education, Rhetoric, Status, Superiority
- βουργέσιοι 92, 100, 103. *See also* Integration
- γενναϊότης. *See* Military Prowess, Nobility (of birth)
- γένος 28n.49, 32, 132, 211, 264
- ἔθνος/ ἔθνη 6n.10, 29, 152, 386
- εὐγένεια. *See* Nobility (of birth)
- εὐγλωττία 41, 42, 206, 234, 333, 455. *See also* Pronunciation, Rhetoric, Status
- θέατρα 37–38, 39
- ἰσοπολιτεία 27n.46, 40, 97, 137
- κράλης (title) 141n.15, 190n.41, 195
- λίχιος 71, 136, 137, 271, 368, 420, 423
- λόγος 238, 240n.33, 263, 390n.83
- Μανιακάτοι (regiment) 208, 209
- μίμησις 36, 458. *See also* Models, Traditions
- ξένος 29, 153n.72
- παιδεία 25, 40, 41, 62n.253, 82, 83, 102, 206, 234n.3, 235, 238, 239, 253, 455, 458. *See also* Education, Superiority
- πολιτεία 23, 24n.21, 30, 93, 153n.72

- προίμα 45n.153, 46, 49, 54  
 ῥήξ (term) 154n.77, 164n.126, 192, 272, 273,  
 289, 323, 326, 331, 334, 335, 341, 343, 344,  
 348n.47, 352, 384, 430, 436, 439, 440,  
 443, 444
- Ῥωμαισσύνη 17, 21, 23–24, 25, 28, 31, 454  
 στράτωρ 71, 351, 431, 435n.159  
 τάξις 8, 34, 459  
 Φραγγόπωλοι 225